# Supporting Our Future

The 67th Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference of
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

2017 FINAL REPORT | **CONFIDENTIAL**

# The Sixty-Seventh Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous

## Supporting Our Future

## 2017 Final Report

Hilton Westchester, Rye Brook, NY – April 23-29, 2017

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### Confidential — full names used

Since this report is a *confidential* A.A. document, for members only, it contains members' full names and addresses.

This usage — to facilitate communication within the Fellowship — was approved by the 1975 Conference. Such confidential use respects our Tradition of anonymity in *public* communications and with media (press, radio, TV, etc.).

# The 67th Annual General Service Conference

In the late 1940s, Bill W. came to believe that the survival of A.A. depended on involving groups more directly with the Alcoholic Foundation, which had been formally implemented in 1938 to guide the affairs of A.A. The Foundation, as it was known then, had 15 trustees (eight nonalcoholic and seven alcoholic), but had little connection to actual A.A. groups except through Bill and Dr. Bob (who was ill at that time with the cancer that would take his life in 1950). In order to close what he called this "gap of remoteness," Bill proposed that groups elect regional representatives to attend a yearly "General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous" to discuss issues of importance to A.A. with the trustees and the staffs of the A.A. Headquarters office and Grapevine, and then make a "joint annual report to the Groups."

Predictably, most of the trustees were against such a plan; they feared that a crowd of alcoholics gathering from the hinterlands would interfere with what one trustee wrote to Bill was the "degree of isolation [needed] in dealing with the necessary 'housekeeping,' legal, and financial affairs of the A.A. headquarters." At first reluctant, Dr. Bob gave his blessing to the Conference plan and, with the help of nonalcoholic Class A trustee Bernard Smith, the first General Service Conference was finally held in New York over three days in April 1951, with 37 delegates from the United States and Canada. What Bill called the "politics and uproar" of whether to hold the Conference was ultimately well worth it — albeit at the cost of three trustees who resigned over the issue (one of whom subsequently returned to the Board, ultimately in support of the plan). And so, after four years of trial meetings, the annual General Service Conference became a permanent part of the life of Alcoholics Anonymous in 1955, with the Alcoholic Foundation renamed the General Service Board.

Fast forward to April 23, 2017 — at the Hilton Westchester Hotel in Rye Brook, New York, where 133 voting members constituting the 67th General Service Conference assembled from all parts of A.A.'s eight service regions across the United States and Canada, serving as "the actual voice and the effective conscience for our whole Society" (Concept II, *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*).

Comprised of 93 delegates, 25 trustees and corporate directors from A.A.W.S. and Grapevine, along with 15 General Service Office, Grapevine and La Viña staff members, the 2017 General Service Conference took up a number of questions of interest to the Fellowship as a whole, launching a week's worth of discussion and debate in pursuit of A.A.'s primary purpose. With the theme "Supporting Our Future," the Conference extended from Sunday, April 23 to Saturday, April 29, 2017.

Of the delegates representing the 93 areas in the U.S. and Canada, the average age was 59, with the oldest delegate being 75 and the youngest 37. The average length of

sobriety for delegates was 23 years, with the longest being 51 years and the shortest being 10. And in terms of length of service, the longest was 50 years and the shortest was eight.

Following a warm welcome by Terry Bedient, Class A (nonalcoholic) chairperson of the General Service Board, the official roll call by G.S.O.'s general manager Greg T., and a greeting from Bob M. of South Dakota, delegate chair of the Conference, the Conference Keynote address was given by Bill N., general service trustee. "The theme of this year's Conference is 'Supporting Our Future,'" said Bill, "and for me there is only one way we can support the future of Alcoholics Anonymous: that is by embracing our great Twelve Traditions.

"I say 'embrace,'" Bill continued, "because enforcement has never worked in Alcoholics Anonymous; it is only when newcomers see those who came before them embracing the Traditions that they will want to embrace them, too. And I am speaking of embracing all Twelve Traditions, not picking and choosing which ones are convenient… We don't embrace them out of fear but rather out of love for Alcoholics Anonymous, the only thing that has worked to arrest our alcoholism."

Conference week is long, often arduous, but ultimately rewarding — filled with board and committee reports, presentations and discussions, area service highlights, sharing sessions and committee meetings. The main focus of each Conference though, is on the deliberations of each of the 13 Conference committees, and it is during the committee meetings that the major work of the Conference is done. Once again, this year, after a joint meeting with each corresponding trustees' committee, the Conference committees reviewed material and background information, weighed and discussed various issues, and developed recommendations, many of which resulted in Conference Advisory Actions.

Sunday evening, the Opening Dinner was followed by an open A.A. meeting, chaired by Barry S., Idaho, chairperson of the Conference Agenda Committee; the leader was Jim S., South Carolina. Speakers were Dave H., Northwest Texas; Carole B., A.A. Grapevine director; Rich P., Northeast regional trustee; Jeff W., G.S.O. staff; and Reilly K., Oregon.

At the Delegates Only meeting Tuesday evening, Ben B., Oklahoma, was selected as the delegate chair for the 68th Conference; Joann L., Petaluma, California, will be alternate chair. On Wednesday, trustee elections were held, and, following our Third Legacy A.A. procedure, three incoming trustees were selected — with all three names coming out of the hat following a series of five ballots in which no candidate gained a two-thirds majority. Mark E., of Lebanon, Ohio, was selected as East Central regional trustee; Cathy B. of Morgantown, West Virginia, was selected as Southeast regional trustee; and Newton P., of Cary, North Carolina, was selected as trustee-at-large/U.S.

Often negotiating through seemingly impossible parliamentary and procedural ins and outs to arrive at the group conscience, the Conference worked its way through agenda items, slowly and carefully articulating a path forward for the Fellowship on matters of considerable interest, spanning questions of how and when to best utilize technology to help carry the A.A. message, questions of inclusion and acceptance within the Fellowship, and questions of how best to continue supporting the Fellowship, engaging all our Traditions. A listing of Conference Advisory Actions appears on the following pages, along with a summary of additional considerations taken up by each of the different Conference committees.

With discussion and voting on committee agendas and floor actions finally complete, the 2017 General Service Conference then officially closed with the Serenity Prayer, led by Laura H. (English), Richard B. (French) and Gilberto V. (Spanish). And finally, at the closing brunch on Saturday morning, rotating trustees gave their farewell talks: Bill F., East Central regional trustee; Bill N., general service trustee; Chet P., Southeast regional trustee; and Bob W., trustee-at-large/U.S. Unfortunately, Terry Bedient, rotating Class A trustee and chairperson of the General Service Board, who has served the Fellowship as a trustee since 2008, was unable to attend the closing brunch due to illness. Both he and general service trustee Joe D., who passed away in 2016, were held in the thoughts of all present with a grateful moment of silence.

While the efforts of the General Service Conference continue year-round, the annual meeting held each spring is the culmination of activity throughout the Fellowship, a time when the collective conscience of A.A. in the U.S./Canada emerges to highlight a pathway forward that will help groups and members carry the A.A. message today and in the years to come. And so as the 67th Conference began to recede, those returning members of the 68th began to turn their attention toward the theme of the 2018 Conference: "A.A. — A Solution for All Generations." ▲

## Greetings

Good morning, everyone. My name is Bob M., and I am an alcoholic and Panel 66 delegate from Area 63, South Dakota. I would like to welcome everyone to the 67th General Service Conference — my fellow delegates, the trustees and the General Service Office and Grapevine staff. I would also like to welcome Terry, our board chairman, and Greg, the G.S.O. general manager. I have been given the honor and privilege to serve my fellow delegates as their Conference delegate chair.

The Conference theme, "Supporting Our Future," is exactly why God has led us here. God would have us assure that what has worked in the past and is presently working continues, so that the next person through the door can get relief from alcoholism. It came to me when our area chairman read an excerpt from Bill's essay on leadership in Concept IX to open our Area Winter Assembly: that it is through good leadership that A.A. will be able to function and survive in the future. Bill describes all types of leadership in his essay but ends with how we are leaders in our Twelfth Step work. Bill writes, "Every sponsor is necessarily a leader. The stakes are about as big they could be. A human life and usually the happiness of a whole family

hang in the balance. What the sponsor does and says, how well he times and makes his presentation, how well he handles criticisms, and how well he leads his prospect on by personal spiritual example — these qualities of leadership can make all the difference, often the difference between life and death."

I feel so grateful that God put people in my life who led by example and showed me how to do the same. That example in my life has definitely meant the difference between life and death for me. It has led me to be standing here in front of you a humble member and servant of Alcoholics Anonymous who relies upon God for guidance when called upon for leadership, whether in service or, most of all, when I extend my hand to another alcoholic.

A delegate who was rotating out said to me that when he becomes a past delegate the best thing he could do would be to go back and help the next delegate get prepared, take his seat at his home group and put his hand out to the next person who comes through the door. That person who comes through the door may be a life saved, and those lives saved, just like ourselves, could be future Conference delegates. And that is the foundation for our future.

I pray that we can all be the leaders this week that God would have us be so we can support what made the difference between life and death for us all.

If we rely upon God to work through us, our future will be secure.

*Bob M., South Dakota*

## Keynote Address

The theme of this year's Conference is "Supporting Our Future," and for me there is only one way we can support the future of Alcoholics Anonymous, and that is by embracing the great Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. I say "embrace" because enforcement has never worked in Alcoholics Anonymous; it is only when newcomers see those who came before them embracing the Traditions that they will want to embrace them, too. I am speaking of embracing all Twelve Traditions, not picking and choosing which ones are convenient. You will never win a popularity contest by standing up against a popular idea because your gut tells you it goes against one of our great Twelve Traditions, but it is every A.A. member's responsibility and the duty of every leader in A.A. to do the same. We don't embrace them out of fear but rather out of love for Alcoholics Anonymous, the only thing that has worked to arrest our alcoholism.

I told you my name, my service position, and that I am an alcoholic, but let me clearly state what I mean when I say I am an alcoholic. I am not a heavy drinker, a binge drinker, or even someone addicted to alcohol; rather, I suffer from an "allergy" to alcohol, an allergy that is clearly described and defined in two specific chapters in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, "The Doctor's Opinion" and "More About Alcoholism." Every time I drink I have a reaction to alcohol that normal people do not; my body tells me I have to and need to keep drinking. On top of this physical compulsion, the next day or night when I grow uncomfortable in my own skin, my mind tells me the only way to feel comfortable again is to have the first drink regardless of the consequences the last time I drank.

The courts might believe they can mandate me to get better, and others feel they can legislate this; some doctors and scientists believe they can invent a vaccination or medicate my recovery. But I have accepted that only a spiritual experience as the result of the Twelve Steps can arrest my alcoholism. I know today that you can't sentence a spiritual experience, that you can't legislate a spiritual experience, and that, even as a sponsor, I can't schedule a spiritual experience. You can simply *have* a spiritual experience as a result of our Twelve Steps.

Just like the newcomer looks to the more experienced member for help with our Traditions, groups look to districts, districts to assemblies, and assemblies to the General Service Conference and General Service Board to set an example. A.A.'s leaders have a sacred duty to, above all else, embrace all Twelve Traditions. I do not believe we should ever look for a way around a Tradition or try to make something work if it does not feel right. I firmly believe that you can't ask a newcomer to observe one Tradition while you ignore a few others. I believe it is time for many in Alcoholics Anonymous to stop using the Fourth Tradition to break other Traditions. History shows

that the Fourth Tradition was not created to be a veto over the others; rather, it was created to give groups flexibility regarding group "customs." If any group — including an area assembly, area officers, the General Service Board or service corporations — breaks a Tradition, it is affecting other groups and A.A. as a whole.

Last year, I heard about a group that caught my attention for sure because this group had decided to let nonalcoholics become members of their group and hold service positions. The group believed that the Fourth Tradition gave them this flexibility, and I could not disagree more. This group wanted the world to know that they used the Fourth Tradition to reinterpret the Third Tradition. I want to respect all of A.A., every different opinion, even the A.A. that is different from mine, but I can't support any group that wants to rewrite our Traditions or declare our Traditions out of touch and old-fashioned. Nothing could be further from the truth.

We live in a changing world, and one can only wonder how much more quickly it will change 50 years from now. We, as voting members, are here to take care of A.A. today and for those already here, but we are all the lucky ones: our more important mission is to make sure A.A. is here for the alcoholic not here yet and not even born yet. We have a sacred duty to make sure that the A.A. that was here to greet us is present for those not here yet, and we can only guarantee that if we embrace all Twelve Traditions at every level of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Some experts suggest that speakers should tell their audiences something about themselves that their listeners would not expect in order to keep their attention, so I will take a page out of that book in order to make sure I don't put you all to sleep. I am told some would not call me emotional or sensitive, so let me pull the curtain back a bit on my public persona. I am a big fan of singers on reality audition shows. I am taken aback by the ones nobody expects to be any good but who wind up receiving a standing ovation from the audience. There are a few who have actually caused a hard-ass like me to have tears in his eyes. I've wondered why I have these reactions. Is it my love of music? Is that what does it?

It took me a while to figure this out, but, in the end, it is my love for the underdog. I belong to a Fellowship — a great society called Alcoholics Anonymous — that is filled with underdogs, and I stand today in a room giving this talk to a room filled with underdogs. I stand today looking at an audience where most of those in attendance have two things in common with me: first, they suffer from this horrible illness called alcoholism; and, second, at one time in their lives, the rest of the world — including their families and loved ones — gave up on them. Right now, all over the world at the top of this hour, our great Preamble is being read by some with just a few hours or days of sobriety on the front lines of Alcoholics Anonymous. All around the world about an hour ago, great members of A.A. opened church basements and clubhouses, turned the lights on and made the coffee.

Today, all around the world, people's lives will change, and they will have no idea just how important today is — the first day of the rest of their lives. They will attend their first A.A. meeting. Next April, some of those people will get their one-year cake and celebrate their first A.A. anniversary. At those meetings, before they even speak, their family members will have tears in their eyes, seeing that our Steps can heal what all the money and love in the world could not heal.

For those who, like me, suffer from alcoholism, we know it is indeed the war of alcoholism, the battle for our very lives. Like any war, the front lines look much different from this nice room we are gathered in today. I echo the great words of past Class A trustee John Fromson, who warned others not to confuse the well-dressed people and pretty rooms of New York service meetings with the more important work on the front lines of Alcoholics Anonymous, in home groups all around the world. Broken women and men of all ages have come to what we affectionately call "the last house on the block," the house you come to because you are not welcome anywhere else. And our doors welcome all alcoholics. The long form of our great Third Tradition states that our membership ought to include all those who suffer from alcoholism.

For me, listening to heavy metal music and drinking in the woods seemed perfectly normal. While others sat in school and dreamed about what college they would attend, I just wondered how quickly I could get back into the woods and listen to music and drink. After 13 years of living uncomfortably in my own skin, I was introduced to what our book calls "King Alcohol" or "John Barleycorn." Alcohol did not take me somewhere; rather, it allowed me to leave my state of being uncomfortable. It was the *solution* to my problem, not my problem. At 13 years old, I had no idea that while alcohol solved my living problem, I also had a deadly allergy to this magic elixir I found for my life. While I sought out the relief of that first drink, I had no idea that I had a compulsion that makes it impossible for me to stop drinking.

I have been taught there are no honors in Alcoholics Anonymous — just opportunities to serve the Fellowship that saved my life. Opportunities to pay back a debt that never goes away. A debt that actually grows as one's life is further put back together by the power of the Twelve Steps. A debt that can only be paid by giving service back to the Fellowship that gave us a second and sometimes a 100th chance. The paradox in our great Fellowship is that the more you get, the more you must give. At many service events I have been asked how much one is paid to be a trustee, and for a long time I would answer that we are not paid.

I have come to the conclusion that this was an improper answer because I have never been paid more in my life than I have for freely giving service to Alcoholics Anonymous. While Doctor Silkworth would be shocked to see how large the recovery economy has become, I feel confident that our founders smile down from above, knowing that A.A. is still for fun and for free. All the gold in Fort Knox would not come close to equaling how much I have been paid.

A.A. clearly has some challenges in front of it, as we are

barely into the 21st century. Using some modern language of our times, it is easy for one to get a few years and "go negative." I speak from experience and not opinion here, and I can assure anyone that nothing productive comes from "going negative." Our history is filled with stories around fear — fear of everyone and everything. Fear that different is bad; fear that change will end our very existence.

We are a fellowship of paradoxes, starting with the first one: You have to admit you are powerless in order to get power. However, we have other paradoxes. We tell the membership we need more people involved in service, but then ask them, when they accept our invitation, to leave their good ideas at home. Do we get fearful of change? On the personal recovery side, we tell newcomers that they have a choice — "change or die" — and yet the slightest change proposed at a group, district or assembly is often looked at as heresy, and always because of our great "Rule 63": "We have always done it this way." And I am not talking about change to our great 36 spiritual principles; I speak mostly of how people find us and of how we communicate to let them know where to find us.

Close your eyes if you wish, and think back to the 1950s after the Jack Alexander article [article written for *The Saturday Evening Post* by one of A.A.'s earliest nonalcoholic friends]. Imagine if we as an organization had not embraced the technology of the telephone. We have the old A.A. phrase "telephone therapy" and the saying, "The phone does not weigh 10,000 pounds." How many people came to A.A. as a result of the telephone? How many came to A.A. because their sponsors came to A.A. because of the telephone?

Let's go back to the spring of 1935, when Bill W. took his trip to Akron, Ohio. In 1935, a telephone — in particular, a pay telephone — was found in every hotel lobby. Imagine if Bill W. had no telephone to use that fateful day in Akron. It would be like someone looking for a meeting today while staying in a hotel with no Wi-Fi, or no computer in the lobby or business center. I think it is clear from my words that I support and believe we must use all available technology to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous and make sure we are where those with alcoholism look for help. I say this with one important reservation, and that reservation is that everything we do must fit within our great Twelve Traditions.

I look at the future 20 years from now and think about *anonymity* and *affiliation*. Anonymity is half of our name, and a subject so important it has two Traditions dedicated to it. Many speak of the anonymity of "press, radio and film" found in the Eleventh Tradition, but it seems we don't talk enough about the anonymity found in the Twelfth Tradition centered around humility. It is not in the DNA of the real alcoholic to be famous for being sober; our spiritual malady can't handle fame based on sobriety.

I looked through our history to see the last time we as a Fellowship had to examine a new means of technology where some thought the benefit of that technology was so great it was worth ignoring our Traditions. I want to bring you all back to the early days of the VCR, the video cassette recorder. These were the days at the end of the Betamax phase — hard to believe technology has changed so much in this relatively short amount of time. Many in A.A. thought we would be able to video the best speakers in A.A., and those groups that could not afford to fly in a speaker could instead have an audiovisual service position, much like the coffeemaker, who could play a video of the speaker for their members. What an incredible way to carry the message! However, our Fellowship, after many informed discussions, decided that videos of speakers showing their full faces did not fit within our great Twelve Traditions.

Why did we do this? After all, only A.A. members would see the video; no personal anonymity would be lost at the level of press, radio and film. Instead, we as a Fellowship embraced the lost anonymity-related Tradition, our great Twelfth Tradition. The Twelfth Tradition speaks of humility in relation to anonymity. It gives us a warning much like the warnings that we find all through the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*: We who suffer from alcoholism are not wired to be famous or receive accolades because we are sober. This may be different for the heavy or binge drinkers, but not for those of us who fit the description of membership found in our great Third Tradition.

I want to close with talking about Traditions One and Two. Our unity as a Fellowship must take the first seat out of all 12 seats. Without unity, our doors will not remain open, and our job as a service structure is to keep the doors open, the coffee warm and our literature available, and to make sure there is at least one cold seat open for the new woman or man who enters our Fellowship. After that, we are to make sure that the new person witnesses a meeting where members share A.A. in an A.A. meeting.

That's where Tradition Two appears: only an informed group conscience allows us to decide what is good for A.A. and not good for A.A. *A.A. Comes of Age* made clear to me that the group always knows better than me, whether that is an A.A. group, a district, an assembly, the General Service Conference or the General Service Board. My job and duty is to carry out the group conscience. In a few rare circumstances I might need to exercise my right to a minority opinion or appeal, but that is a rare circumstance. The spiritual growth that my life depends on comes with me accepting that the group always knows better than me.

I myself have my own opinions on items this Conference will decide. Will I leave next Saturday ready to carry out the group conscience decided this week? Or will I spend my nights planning how to change it later? I speak from experience, knowing that my life and sobriety are enhanced when I leave here ready to carry out the informed group conscience, particularly things that did not go my way.

I leave you with a little math example I use in relation to leadership in A.A. Our Concepts talk about the following four qualities for a leader: tolerance, responsibility, flexibility and vision. For me, in my personal experience, tolerance + flexibility + vision = responsibility; and intolerance + inflexibility + lack of vision = *irresponsibility*.

*William N., General Service Trustee*

# Advisory Actions

*Conference Advisory Actions represent recommendations made by the standing committees and approved by the Conference body as a whole or recommendations discussed and voted on by all Conference members during general sessions. The group conscience of the Fellowship in the United States and Canada was expressed in the following Advisory Actions, which the General Service Board accepted in its legally required annual meeting following the 2017 Conference.*

### FLOOR ACTIONS

It was recommended that:

1 In the spirit of unity and inclusiveness, the General Service Office strive to provide Conference background materials in English by February 15 and Spanish and French by the first week in March, beginning with the 68th General Service Conference.

2 The pamphlet "Too Young?" be revised to reflect more current collective experiences of young alcoholics and their welcome to A.A.

3 A.A. Grapevine create a Google for Nonprofits account, with use of the account limited to the YouTube Nonprofit Program and with a guarantee that comments not be shown on the A.A. Grapevine YouTube pages. The A.A. Grapevine Board will track its effectiveness through website metrics.

### AGENDA

It was recommended that:

4 The theme for the 2018 General Service Conference be: "A.A. — A Solution for All Generations."

5 The following be presentation/discussion topics for the 2018 General Service Conference:

a. Today's Alcoholic: Inclusion, Not Exclusion

b. Participation in All of A.A. — Is My Triangle Balanced?

c. A.A. Technology: Where Innovation Meets the Traditions

d. Attraction Not Promotion: A.A.'s Relation to the World

e. Group Conscience: The Guiding Force

6 The following be the workshop topic for the 2018 General Service Conference: "Getting the A.A. Message Out…"

### ARCHIVES[1]

It was recommended that:

7 A draft or a progress report of *Unity in Action: Bill W.'s General Service Conference Talks,* 1951–1970 (working title) be brought back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Archives for review.

### COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY

It was recommended that:

8 The pamphlet "Three Talks to Medical Societies by Bill W." be retired.

9 A footnote with the following text be added to the pamphlet "Problems Other Than Alcohol" at the bottom of page one:

> This pamphlet is derived from an article written by A.A. co-founder Bill W. in 1958. Therefore, some of the language may be dated, but the issues addressed are prevalent today.

10 The title of the pamphlet "Is There an Alcoholic in the Workplace?" be changed to "Is There a Problem Drinker in the Workplace?"

11 The trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community review the pamphlet "If You Are a Professional," develop text to include information for professionals who come in contact with veterans and active members of the Armed Services, including information on how to contact A.A. worldwide, and bring back a report or draft text to the 2018 Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community for review.

12 The trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community review the pamphlet "Members of the Clergy Ask About Alcoholics Anonymous," develop text to include information for professionals

[1]Members of this committee serve on this as a secondary committee assignment.

who come in contact with veterans and active members of the Armed Services, including information on how to contact A.A. worldwide, and bring back a report or draft text to the 2018 Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community for review.

**13** The trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community review the pamphlet "A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional," develop text to include information for professionals who come in contact with veterans and active members of the Armed Services, including information on how to contact A.A. worldwide, and bring back a report or draft text to the 2018 Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community for review.

## CORRECTIONS

None.

## FINANCE

It was recommended that:

**14** The suggested area contribution for delegate expense for the Conference be increased from $1,600 to $1,800.

**15** Review of the suggested Area contribution for delegates' expenses to the Conference be every other year. The next review will take place in 2019.

**16** Review of the Conference-approved level for bequests to the General Service Board from A.A. members be every other year. The next review will take place in 2019.

**17** Review of the Conference-approved maximum annual contribution to the General Service Board from an individual A.A. member be every other year. The next review will take place in 2019.

**18** The following text be added to the pamphlet "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix": "Question: Can an individual or group make a recurring online contribution? Answer: Yes, online at aa.org."

[1]Members of this committee serve on this as a secondary committee assignment.

## GRAPEVINE

None.

## INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS/ REGIONAL FORUMS[1]

None.

## LITERATURE

It was recommended that:

**19** The following two bullet points in the section "What procedures can a group set up to sponsor new members?" in the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship" be removed:

- A *file* of names, addresses, and phone numbers of newcomers (who wish to volunteer the information), with notations showing sponsor or sponsors for each one.
- *Review of newcomers* list by steering committee (or Twelfth Step or sponsorship committee) — with follow-up activity where it seems needed.

**20** The revised plan for the annual review of recovery literature be implemented, with the first report to be delivered to the 2018 Conference Committee on Literature.

**21** The following text about young people's conferences be added to the pamphlet "Young People and A.A." in the section "Where do I find A.A.?":

> Young people's conferences are held in the United States and Canada and around the world. For information, consult your local A.A. area, intergroup office, or search online for YPAA.

**22** Question 10 in the pamphlet "The A.A. Group" in the section "A.A. Group Inventory" that currently reads, "Are we doing all we can to provide an attractive and accessible meeting place?" be revised to read:

> Are we doing all we can to provide a safe, attractive and accessible meeting place?

**23** The pamphlet "The A.A. Group" be revised to add the following text from "Safety and A.A.: Our Common Welfare" to the section "Principles Before Personalities":

### Safety and A.A.: Suggestions to Consider

"Safety is an important issue within A.A. — one that all groups and members can address to develop workable solutions and help keep our meetings safe based on the fundamental principles of the Fellowship.

*"'Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.* (Tradition One, Long Form)'

"A.A. groups are spiritual entities made up of alcoholics who gather for the sole purpose of staying sober and helping other alcoholics to achieve sobriety. Yet, we are not immune to the difficulties that affect the rest of humanity.

"Alcoholics Anonymous is a microcosm of the larger society within which we exist. Problems found in the outside world can also make their way into the rooms of A.A. As we strive to share in a spirit of trust, both at meetings and individually with sponsors and friends, it is reasonable for each member to expect a meaningful level of safety. Those attending A.A. meetings derive a benefit by providing a safe environment in which alcoholics can focus on gaining and maintaining sobriety. The group can then fulfill its primary purpose — to carry the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers. For this reason, groups and members discuss the topic of safety."

For more information see "Safety and A.A.: Our Common Welfare" (SMF-209) www.aa.org.

**24** The trustees' Literature Committee develop language regarding safety to be incorporated in current and new recovery literature, where appropriate, along with a plan for implementation. The committee requested that the draft language and proposed plan or progress report be brought back to the 2018 General Service Conference.

### POLICY/ADMISSIONS

It was recommended that:

**25** The 2018 General Service Conference move ahead with electronic voting to be used for all Conference voting, with the exception of elections for regional trustees and trustees-at-large, which are conducted by ballot.

**26** The trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference develop a plan for the equitable distribution of the workload of Conference committees by combining and/or creating committees for review by the 2018 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions.

**27** Starting with the 67th General Service Conference, an anonymity-protected digital *Final Conference Report* be published in addition to the current print version.

**28** The 70th General Service Conference be held April 19-25, 2020 since these dates do not conflict with any significant holiday or hotel availability.

**29** Starting at the 2018 General Service Conference, the proposed dates of future General Service Conferences be considered as an Additional Committee Consideration rather than requiring an Advisory Action.

**30** General Service Office management submit a report on the process, implementation and status on the site selection of the General Service Conference for review by the 2018 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions.

### PUBLIC INFORMATION

It was recommended that:

**31** A new video public service announcement be developed for a cost not to exceed $40,000.

**32** The pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity" be rewritten to include material from G.S.O. literature covering Tradition Eleven and to expand the discussion of humility in Tradition Twelve as it relates to anonymity, and that a progress report or draft language be brought back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Public Information.

**33** A.A. World Services, Inc. create a Google for Nonprofits account, with use of the account limited to the YouTube Nonprofit Program and with a guarantee that comments not be shown on A.A.W.S. YouTube pages. The committee requested that a report including information from website analytics and the usefulness and effectiveness of the A.A.W.S. YouTube account be brought back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Public Information.

### REPORT AND CHARTER

It was recommended that:

**34** The following text be added to chapter four of *The A.A. Service Manual.*

#### Area Websites

Many A.A. entities now use websites as a way to communicate meeting and service information within the Fellowship. An A.A. website can serve as a public information tool, providing information about A.A. to the public as well. As with newsletters, it has been found prudent for a committee (rather than one or two individuals) to be responsible for the format, planning and content of the website.

As anonymity is the "spiritual foundation of all our Traditions," we practice anonymity on A.A. websites at all times. An A.A. website is a public medium, which has the potential for reaching the broadest possible audience and, therefore, requires the same safeguards that we use at the level of press, radio and film. Some areas have included password-protected sections of the website, which can limit access to members only, and where full names may be used. Not all A.A. websites contain the same information.

For instance, in places where an active intergroup or central office provides meeting information, general service websites may not need to duplicate this effort, and may link to them instead.

A.A. websites may feature brief excerpts from A.A. literature using the same guidelines as newsletters. If a site wishes to include items that are currently available on the G.S.O. or Grapevine websites, they may link to the appropriate pages of those sites. Area websites may copy a thumbnail of a pamphlet, book or video from these sites and use it on the site as a link to the material on the G.S.O. or A.A. Grapevine site. Because public service announcements are intended to be widely shared, they may be posted directly on local A.A. sites. For more information, see the "FAQ on A.A. Websites" and the A.A. Guidelines on the Internet.

**35** The Bylaws of A.A. World Services, Inc. and A.A. Grapevine, Inc. be included in *The A.A. Service Manual* as appendices.

**36** A new section on the General Service Board's "Mission-Vision-Action Statement" be added to chapter nine of *The A.A. Service Manual*.

**37** The G.S.O. Department reports which are shared at Conference be included in the *Final Conference Report*.

**38** Brief bios for nontrustee directors, similar to those for trustees, be included in the *Final Conference Report*.

## TREATMENT AND ACCESSIBILITIES

It was recommended that:

**39** The pamphlet "A.A. for the Alcoholic with Special Needs" be approved with suggested editorial changes and be retitled "Accessibility for All Alcoholics."

## TRUSTEES

It was recommended that:

**40** The following slate of trustees be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the General Service Board in April 2017, following presentation at the 2017 General Service Conference for disapproval, if any:

### Class A

| | |
|---|---|
| Leslie S. Backus, B.A. | Peter Luongo, Ph.D., LCSW-C |
| Hon. Christine Carpenter | Nancy J. McCarthy |
| Michele Grinberg, J.D. | David M. Morris, C.P.A. |
| Hon. Ivan L.R. Lemelle | |

### Class B

| | |
|---|---|
| Thomas A. | Scott H. |
| Cathy B. | David N. |
| Richard B. | Newton P. |
| Carole B. | Richard P. |
| Joel C. | Ginger R. B. |
| Mark E. | Cate W. |
| Yolanda F. | Vacancy |

**41** The following slate of officers of the General Service Board be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the General Service Board in April 2017, following presentation at the 2017 General Service Conference for disapproval, if any:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Chairperson* | Michele Grinberg, J.D. |
| *First vice-chairperson* | Joel C. |
| *Second vice-chairperson* | Scott H. |
| *Treasurer* | David M. Morris, C.P.A. |
| *Secretary* | Yolanda F. |
| *Assistant treasurer* | Bob Slotterback |
| *Assistant secretary* | Eva S. |

**42** The January 2017 appointment of the following officers by the chair of the General Service Board be approved at the annual meeting of the members of the General Service Board in April 2017:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Assistant treasurer* | Bob Slotterback |
| *Assistant secretary* | Eva S. |

This appointment process is in accordance with the General Service Board Bylaws.

**43** The following slate of directors be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the A.A. World Services Corporate Board in April 2017, following presentation at the 2017 General Service Conference for disapproval, if any:

| | |
|---|---|
| Tom A. | David N. |
| Deborah A. | Richard P. |
| Richard B. | Eva P. |
| Beau B. | Greg T. |
| Homer M. | |

**44** The following slate of directors be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board in April 2017, following presentation at the 2017 General Service Conference for disapproval, if any:

Carole B.
Ami B.
Josh E.
Yolanda F.
Tommi H.
Ivan Lemelle
Paz P.
Ginger R. B.
Cate W.

**45** The Bylaws of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc., as revised, be approved at the annual meeting of the General Service Board in April 2017.

# Presentations

## Growth

### Communication — Today and Tomorrow

Our founders showed us the way, starting with that first encounter between two drunks in Akron. As Bill sat with Dr. Bob and shared his experience, one drunk to another, it was the most direct and simple form of communication. That meeting would give Dr. Bob the courage and hope to begin his journey of happiness and sobriety.

Since the beginning of A.A., communication — which is at the heart of "carrying the message" of recovery and extending the hand of A.A. to alcoholics who still suffer — has taken many forms. There were Twelfth Step visits to health care facilities and homes, the glorious success of an article published in the *Saturday Evening Post* and, of course, the publishing of the Big Book. As A.A. developed and structured itself, all the tools of communication were put into use to carry the message of recovery: pamphlets and publications aimed at members as well as the public at large; public interest messages for both TV and radio; information booths at various public events and professional conventions; representation in the schools; and written and verbal interviews with the media. Still today, A.A. communicates with people all over the world.

Our concern about maintaining anonymity is of great importance, even though throughout the years that anonymity may have been broken due to ignorance or carelessness on the part of our members and the media. We continue to watch over and remind people of the importance of anonymity.

With the advent of the Internet and the World Wide Web, A.A. has adapted by adding the use of the Internet to its own methods of communication and by developing guidelines to mark our presence on the web and to define ways in which our members can make use of social media.

Yes, the times have changed, and, yes, our movement has kept on top of these changes and has adapted to them with caution. Social media in particular has opened new frontiers to explore and utilize to efficiently extend the hand of A.A. to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Bill and the pioneers of A.A. would probably be shocked by Google, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr and Skype, and without a doubt by the phenomenon of the universality of the smartphone. At the same time, they would have surely seen the huge potential of assuring, and possibly increasing, the importance and recognition of our association. And so, based on our past experience, they would have been the first to encourage a thoughtful approach.

Over the years, different aspects of our movement have faced turning points in regard to all of these new channels of communication and the behaviors they have generated. The ways in which people get informed and communicate have changed. The number of options — instant messaging, texting and email, constant searching online — has made us talk less and less in person and amongst ourselves. We "like" and we "poke" and we text from one room to another, or from one end of the world to the other. Amongst us, within our own structure, we are seeing symptoms of communication that leave much to be desired. There is a large gap between the General Service Conference and the individual members of A.A. Is there a breakdown in communication between groups, G.S.R.s, D.C.M.s and the area steering committees? How do we remedy this? And what can we say about the distance between the Conference and the alcoholic still suffering on the street corner?

We can surely say that the 21st century is well underway, and that we must jump into all of the modern and current modes of communication at our disposal to carry the message and make people aware of A.A. But, most importantly, our thoughts and this jump into modern times should be done through the structure that has served us so well until now: the inverted triangle.

Our members are the first line of communication. They let us know their needs and concerns through their G.S.R.s. After that, the D.C.M.s bring these thoughts to the district and to the area assemblies, where these needs and

concerns are discussed. If needed, these ideas are brought to the delegate in order to broaden the discussion at the Conference level.

Who then, amongst the A.A. family, is the main person responsible for communication? Asking this question is in fact answering it because it is the group members who are at the top of the inverted triangle. If they don't exercise their rights and their responsibility to voice their opinions and concerns within the organizational model, then they are giving up their privilege to contribute to the progress of our association.

At all levels, basic dialogue is necessary to ensure fair and clear decisions. Our Traditions and Concepts must be the backbone of those decisions. If everything over and above us is done according to the principles of unity and service, we can be assured that the Conference reflects the whole of the membership of A.A. Never forget that love and tolerance toward others is our mandate. Without those two principles, an open and constructive communication would easily fail.

Just as A.A. resolved its financial problems at the beginning, we must, in 2017, work at putting today's means of communication toward our Twelfth Step work. Our challenge: to combine personal anonymity with the transmission of our message on social media. Our future certainly depends on this, which is why we must continually review our ways of communicating, why we must strive to make our trusted servants and all our members aware of the importance of their role in communication and in the protection of our principles of unity, singleness of purpose and anonymity.

These ideas can only come from our collective conscience as it manifests in workshops, seminars and plenary assemblies. The potential for connection between ourselves and the alcoholic who still suffers must encourage us to pursue our efforts in this direction.

*Thomas G., Southwest Québec*

## Diversity — Outreach and Attraction

Greetings. My name is Larry M., and I am an alcoholic. I serve Area 78 Alberta/Northwest Territories as their Panel 66 delegate. Thank you for the opportunity to give this presentation on the topic of "Diversity — Outreach and Attraction."

Alcoholism is growing at an exponential rate, and yet we are told our membership numbers are flat. Are we doing enough to reach out and attract people of all types to our program in order to support our future?

Reaching out to people in remote communities is becoming a major focus in many areas. Just witness the growing interest in the Remote Communities meeting held prior to the Conference. There is a great deal of sharing about what is being done to meet the needs of those who are remote by linguistics, geography, ethnicity and culture. New technologies are helping us to reach out to these people. In Area 78 we have a vast area where people are isolated and remote by geography. Thanks to technology, we are able to provide access to A.A. through a weekly videoconference meeting. A great deal of planning went into this meeting to make sure it was attractive to a wide range of people — not only to people of differing cultures, but also to workers in the very isolated work camps of the diamond and oil industries.

There are vast numbers of alcoholics who do not come to our meeting rooms because of poor reading and writing skills. Should we not be looking at ways to provide some of our literature at a reading level they can understand?

Alcoholism is becoming an increasing problem with our young people. It is great to see the rise in the numbers of young people entering the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. Are we doing enough to extend the hand of A.A. to young people through more outreach in our education institutions through displays, speakers and information sessions? Supporting our Young People in A.A. organizations and groups is vital. We need to listen and to recognize their ideas and concerns with respect to anonymity and peer pressure, the Internet and social media. The 66th Conference approved the establishment of a Twitter account, but this is only one step. What more needs to be done?

Many alcoholics also have serious mental health issues. For far too long, mental health problems have been swept under the carpet by society. They are a fact and a reality of life, and many suffering from health issues use alcohol to cope. We need to reach out to these suffering people. The long-awaited pamphlet on mental health issues cannot come out soon enough. But more must be done. How many areas speak to the staff and patients in our mental health institutions? How many of us offer materials to our psychiatrists and psychologists? I have suffered from a mental illness for more than 25 years — severe and chronic clinical depression that I used to medicate with alcohol. The psychiatrist I see knew virtually nothing about Alcoholics Anonymous until I became her patient. She is now thankful that I introduced her to the program and she now has another tool to treat alcoholism, which is hampering treatment of the primary mental illness of some of her patients. She is also encouraging her colleagues to learn more.

Are we doing enough to reach out to the people on the front lines who cope with the devastation caused by alcoholism — doctors, nurses, paramedics, law enforcement? Many do not understand much about our program. In my area we cooperate with a faculty of medicine in one of our larger centers. It is compulsory for the medical students to attend a special combined A.A. meeting and information session put on by the Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee. This has expanded to the nurses' program and into another university. The students welcome this information and feel they are better equipped to recommend our program to patients. Should we not be doing more of this? Our area is currently working with the Chief Justices in Alberta, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut to provide information on our program to members of our judiciary system. To us this outreach is very important. But what about others on the front lines — paramedics and law enforcement, to name just two?

Due to advances in medicine and health, people are liv-

ing longer. There are many in our seniors' facilities suffering from alcoholism. Are we reaching out to these centers and making our program attractive to them? I have had personal experience in working with a group of octogenarians in a senior center. They are not so concerned about the Steps but are more intrigued by the Big Book and use it as a focus for their biweekly book club meetings. They have all stopped drinking and have some of the best Big Book discussion sessions I have ever witnessed. Because of age, mobility issues and health concerns, they do not wish to attend A.A. meetings but feel they are doing their part. I offered to attend, but they said I am too young. An 84-year-old member in my home group now attends their book club meetings.

We have done a lot to make the A.A. program attractive to the LGBTQ community, but I personally feel that we can do more. I have been privileged to facilitate inventory sessions in two LGBTQ groups in my area and for me it was an eye-opener, as I had never been aware of the special obstacles and challenges they face in A.A. We all must do more to recognize and help lessen these challenges so they, too, can focus on recovery.

In these times of economic insecurity, many people turn to alcohol to cope. Many have become homeless and live on the streets. Are we reaching out to those people? Are we making the workers in drop-in centers and homeless centers aware of how A.A. might help?

And finally, are we doing enough in our group meetings to attract and keep newcomers? Are we accepting, warm, caring and loving? Are our meetings attractive enough that people want to keep coming back? Do we spend time speaking with the newcomer? Are we making them feel welcome? Do we contact them between meetings to make sure they are okay? Is our meeting environment safe, and do we ensure that members are rebuked and sanctioned for making demeaning, derogatory or sexist comments? Are predators dealt with swiftly?

I have only touched on some areas where it is necessary for future generations that we improve our outreach in order to attract more members to our very diverse society.

*Larry M., Alberta/*
*Northwest Territories*

## Safety — An Important Consideration

My name is Vikki, and I am an alcoholic. I currently have the honor to serve as delegate of the California Northern Interior Area, Panel 66. I would like to thank Mary Clare and Rick for the loving invitation to speak today.

I thought it was interesting at the General Service Conference last year that the original presentation topic was "Safety in A.A. — Our Responsibility." Then, one of my favorite Class A trustees, Judge Ivan Lemelle, came to the mike and expressed concern about the public's perception of what "our responsibility" really means and that perhaps it could be a liability issue. The Conference presentation idea was changed to its current form.

That got me thinking. What *is* the public's and professional communities' perception of Alcoholics Anonymous? Specifically, do they think Alcoholics Anonymous is a safe place to be, and, if not, how did they arrive at that perception?

We all know there are many ways A.A. meetings can be unsafe. There are physical dangers that include, but are not limited to, misinformation about medications and treatment programs, bullying, sexual harassment and inappropriate touching. There are liability dangers and the potential for vandalism of one's property. There may be financial predators lurking in the rooms looking for victims, and, of course, there are members with behavioral health problems.

How do we handle potential danger or safety issues? Fortunately for us, the Traditions have already been put in place to guide us. Tradition One tells us we have an obligation to our common welfare. Tradition Three states, in part, we have only one requirement in Alcoholics Anonymous. Tradition Five reminds us about our primary purpose. Tradition Ten states we should not be drawn into public controversy. Tradition Eleven reminds us that our public relations policy is based on attraction, not promotion, and Tradition Twelve tells us to place principles before personalities.

Besides the Traditions, there are many ways to increase safety in meetings. Good sponsorship is another tool we can use to increase safety. We can start by talking about potential dangers and potentially dangerous people. It doesn't have to be a secret. If there is an individual who is known to the group as a predator, let the new person be

aware. Predators are like cockroaches: the only way to get rid of them is to shine the light on them.

Also, it is important to select good leadership in our groups, districts and areas. Good leaders should know the proper procedures in case of an emergency situation and know how to stay calm but firm when potential dangers arise. A good leader should make awareness of the safety issues a priority by organizing presentations and workshops.

There are no "A.A. police." The General Service Office has no authority, legal or otherwise, to control or direct the behavior of A.A. members and groups. So, who has the responsibility? We all do! Collectively and individually, it is up to us.

Develop a plan or course of action in your home group's business or group conscience meeting. Decide what to do if a situation requires police involvement and who should call the police. Just because A.A. is considered a safe haven from drinking doesn't mean it is a safe haven from violence. If your group conscience dictates, don't be afraid to ask disruptive members to leave the meeting. Remember, our common welfare comes first. If one person is preventing other members from hearing the message of Alcoholics Anonymous, it is okay if one or two members take that individual outside to talk. If the disruptive behavior continues, a member can be invited not to attend that group for a while. We do not kick people out of A.A., but if behavior warrants, we can ask them to attend a different meeting.

It is important to our future to make sure our Fellowship is attractive to the alcoholics still out there suffering. Nobody wants to attend a meeting they hear is unsafe. Does our Fellowship seem attractive? In order to answer that question, we can review the current Feasibility Study. This study clearly states our membership numbers continue to remain flat. Why is that? I believe part of the answer is our lack of Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (P.I./C.P.C.) efforts.

Did you know there are members of Alcoholics Anonymous across the United States and Canada who aren't even aware we have P.I./C.P.C. committees? Back when Bill W. was around, we had the support of many doctors, lawyers, clergymen, etc. Newspapers were flooded with wonderful stories about our Fellowship and our members. Today, most of the A.A. coverage in public media that I see is negative in nature. As a Fellowship, we cannot stand idly by and let others define us. It is time for us to have a more visible presence on the Internet so that misinformation does not go unchallenged. We cannot give one message about A.A. to the public and ignore educating our own members about how our behavior affects A.A. as a whole.

In the March 1958 Grapevine, Bill W. wrote, "Millions are still sick and other millions soon will be.… Why haven't these millions come to us?" Responding to his own question with a solution, he wrote, "The answer seems to be in *education* — education in schoolrooms, in medical colleges, among clergy and employers, in families, and in the public at large.… Sound education on alcoholism, and far more of it at all levels, will clearly pay off."

Remember that we have found a way out from a terrible illness. Our own survival lies in our ability to carry this message of hope to fellow sufferers. Let us not squander this responsibility.

*Vikki R., California Northern Interior*

## Participation

### Fellowship vs. Membership

I am Susan, the Panel 66 Area 12 delegate serving on the Conference Committee on Corrections. I have been lovingly invited to share today on "Fellowship versus Membership" within the Conference theme of "Supporting Our Future," and I am an alcoholic.

I walked into my first A.A. meeting after passing through a gauntlet of gawkers, a haze of smoke; I was alone, broken, a subject of "King Alcohol." (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, 4th Edition, p. 151) I had attempted suicide. I did not know what to do. My parents did not know what to do. My doctor could only make suggestions. He had no experience.

Within the first five minutes, I heard, "Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope… to solve their common problem and help others to recover…." I glanced at the wall and was promised a "we" — the subject of all 12 Steps, only mentioned in the first, as was alcohol. The other Steps gave me a blueprint for sober living. That "we," however, promised me fellowship. I was no longer alone.

The word *fellowship* comes from the Old Norse in the 12th century: *felagi*, meaning one who puts down money with another in a joint venture. Synonyms include *togetherness, community, brotherhood and society*. *Member*, on the other hand, comes from the Latin *membrum,* meaning limb, member of the body, part. In English, the sense of a person belonging to a group appears early in the 14th century. Thus, a member is a part of a greater set of the fellowship, a group in whose membership action is required, like laying down money. It is not, by definition, one versus the other.

Of course, my head was not clear enough to think about these things then. And certainly we did not have smartphones so I could instantly research the definitions. But I knew I was not alone. And I knew everyone in the room had a common problem. Shortly, I found the courage to raise my hand and declare my membership among my fellows. Hesitantly, I declared: "I am Susan, and I am an alcoholic."

But, is there a difference between *fellowship* and *membership* in Alcoholics Anonymous? Does a "versus" exist between them, or is one a subset of the other, with fellowship a group in whose membership some action is required, as the definition implies?

Our literature is filled with the description of our life within the Fellowship: "the hope 'that every alcoholic who journeys will find the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous

at his destination.'" (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, 4th Edition, p. xv) Instead of "subjects of King Alcohol, shivering denizens of his mad realm," the Fellowship "is a substitute" where we find "release from care, boredom and worry," where imaginations will be fired. "Life will mean something at last"; the most satisfactory years of existence will be ahead. (Ibid., pp. 151-52)

What are the requirements to be a member of this Fellowship? Alcoholics Anonymous is all-inclusive: its only membership requirement a *desire* to stop drinking. We declare ourselves members. (*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 139) All membership requirements were dropped because to make any could be a death sentence. (Ibid., p. 141) We did not have to be sober to raise our hands and become a member of the Fellowship. But, as we sobered, if we wanted to enjoy the true promises of a life among our fellows, we had to learn about the responsibilities of this membership and our guardianship of its future.

But what did our membership responsibility entail? What was the implied action? When I raised my hand and declared myself a member, what did this entail?

To begin, it was action in personal recovery — getting to the next meeting, staying sober in between, finding a sponsor, joining a thing called a home group. Gradually, I perceived the home group was an extended family, a support system where I learned to reintegrate myself back into a social environment. Within this group dynamic I learned to place "principles before personalities." ("The A.A. Group… Where It All Begins," p. 16) I learned about commitment and responsibility. But when I was given a job, my first service commitment — setting out the books and making coffee — I began to glean the meaning of membership and the action required.

At my first business meeting, I stepped into another circle where I learned I had an equal voice, but also the responsibility to listen to the validity of others' opinions. I could vote the dictates of my conscience. I learned how to be "part of," to be trusted in service. I discovered how the application of the principles could be practiced in my daily affairs.

It was when I stepped up into general service, however, that I learned the true import of membership. I realized that as a member I became "an active guardian of our Fellowship" to ensure its legacy for the future. (*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 183) The Responsibility Pledge, written for the 1965 A.A. International Convention in Toronto by former trustee Al S., says it succinctly: "When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible." At the same convention, Dr. Jack Norris [nonalcoholic Class A trustee] wrote, "We must remember that A.A. will continue strong only so long as each of us… takes our fair share of responsibility… for A.A. as a whole. It is in taking responsibility," the implied action of the definition, "that real freedom and the enduring satisfactions of life are found. A.A. has given us the power to choose — to drink or not to drink — and in doing so has given us the freedom to be responsible for ourselves," and "for our share in A.A., and unless we happily accept this responsibility, we lose A.A." (aa.org/frequently-asked-questions-about-a.a.-history)

What, then, is the responsibility of my membership in the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous? Even more action was required as I took on more responsibility: taking and typing notes as secretary; standing in the front line of service work as G.S.R. and then D.C.M., as a link between the Fellowship and the Conference; supporting my delegate as alternate; and becoming informed about the issues, so collectively we can make an informed group conscience for the future here this week. In this way, I help ensure A.A. will be here tomorrow and in 10 years and for the drunk not yet born.

Thus, *fellowship* and *membership* are not one versus the other. By supporting our future in order to enjoy the blessings of the Fellowship I joined when I discovered the "we" of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous, I will do what I can as a member, as its guardian, to ensure that the hand of A.A. and the strength of the Fellowship it represents will always be there, and for that, *we* — all members of our Fellowship — are responsible.

Thank you for the loving invitation to share at the 67th General Service Conference. God bless all the anonymous members of the Fellowship, on whose work we stand and on whose work we will depend in supporting our future!

My service sponsor, without whom my ever-deepening understanding of the responsibility of my membership would not have been possible — to him, I am eternally grateful, as I am to you, who are listening patiently.

*Susan R., Delaware*

## Is Your Voice Heard?

Thank you for the loving invitation to present on this topic: "Is Your Voice Heard?"

In consideration for this presentation and how it ties in to this year's General Service Conference theme, "Supporting Our Future," I was ultimately led to Concept IV, Warranties Three and Four of Article 12, and Bernard B. Smith's moving essay "Why Do We Need a Conference?"

In "The A.A. Group" pamphlet, the A.A. group is noted as the "Final Voice of the Fellowship" in reference to Concept I's message that "the final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship." The pamphlet further elaborates in part, "The entire structure of A.A. depends upon the participation and conscience of the individual groups." We have to exercise a voice to come to this collective conscience in our groups.

So, it begins in our own home groups and with the new members who walk in the door. I think it is our responsibility to inform new people, as soon as reasonably possible, that they have walked into something much bigger than the meetings they are presently attending. In my opinion, it is never too early to let a new person know that, as a member of a home group, they get to voice an opinion on all matters related to the home group: Do we want to spend our group money on coffee? Why or why not? How do we want to divide our Seventh Tradition basket this quarter? Tradition Two assures that their voice on any and all of these group concerns is vital and necessary. Taking a step beyond our home group concerns, we find we also get to weigh in on matters outside our home group through our informed G.S.R.'s vote at the district and area levels. In this interconnected way our collective conscience has begun in the home group.

Concept II states, in part, that in 1955, the A.A. groups "delegated to the Conference complete authority for the active maintenance of our world services and thereby made the Conference… the actual voice and the effective conscience for our whole Society." The voice that began in the home group continues via the G.S.R. and election of our Conference delegates.

Concept III references the "Right of Decision" that prevails in regards to the working relationship between our A.A. groups, the Conference and the General Service Board. Delegates come to the Conference informed, not instructed. We trust our trusted servants to use their voice.

Concept IV states, in part, "Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional 'Right of Participation.'" This means that the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous has recognized that we cannot ask people to serve us and then not allow those trusted servants to fully participate in the decision-making process. At all levels of the Conference structure, every A.A. member has a voice. We all get to participate in the process.

The voice that began in the group continues through the district and area levels. The officers and committee chairs of the areas and districts have a vote along with the G.S.R.s. Even if you are not a voting member, you still have a voice. Have you ever seen your district or area make any big decision without consulting the groups? How did your home group members respond? Was their voice heard?

Warranties Three and Four of Article 12 of the Conference Charter further safeguard our voice:

- Warranty Three: "None of the Conference members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others."
- Warranty Four: "That all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity." This gives the Conference a voice that speaks with authority and confidence: if any remain in opposition, they are far better satisfied because their case has had a full and fair hearing.

Why does it matter whether our voice is heard or not? I believe Bernard B. Smith answers this best in his essay "Why Do We Need a Conference?" when he states, in part, our voice must be heard "to ensure the recovery of a child being born tonight, destined for alcoholism" and "to ensure that changes within A.A. come only as a response to the needs and the wants of all A.A., and not of any few."

Having been able to participate in the General Service Conference process, I now know beyond a shadow of a doubt that, yes, our voice in Alcoholics Anonymous is heard.

*Denise T., Southwest Texas*

## Leadership: "I Am Responsible"

Without doubt, as delegates, all of us here have shown leadership in our respective areas. As a result, the members have entrusted us with the great responsibility of dealing with A.A.'s affairs, making sure that what we do and how we do it contributes to our primary purpose "to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety."

Tradition Two states, "Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern." The big difference between leaders in other social organizations and A.A. is that in most other organizations they do govern: they can enforce policies and regulations, whereas in A.A., leaders lead by example, always standing up for the principles that keep us together when they seem to be compromised.

The great principle that guards against us becoming authoritarian leaders is the principle of rotation. We always hear in A.A. that a trusted servant seems to rotate out just when he or she has learned his service position. However painful it might be for some of us still struggling with those awful defects of control, false pride and prestige, the practice of that principle keeps our Fellowship practicing a genuine democracy for the good of A.A.

Nowadays, when we read the different guidelines that many A.A. entities (areas, districts, even groups) have begun to adopt, we can see that we have started taking on some of the manmade checks and balances and regulations often used in outside organizations, and, with that, we are drifting from the principle of trust. It seems that the fear of people in service making mistakes is slowly eroding the "trust" placed on a service position, leaving it just as "servant"; and, as such, the position has to be controlled and regulated to make sure the servant performs his or her duties well.

Another issue that diminishes great leadership in A.A. is the politics that sometimes takes place when elections for trusted servants are held by an A.A. entity. Although it's not the norm, it happens. Most of the time, under well-intentioned "service sponsorship," someone can still try to control or influence the outcome.

How can we support our future through leadership? Well, Concept IX notes that good service leaders "are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety." We have to take the responsibility of delivering good leadership at all levels, from the group down to the General Service Conference. We have to live up to the Responsibility Pledge so that A.A. is there for those yet to come.

Good leadership starts with good sponsorship, especially service sponsorship. We need to be careful of not falling into the trap of control and manipulation. Temptation is there when sponsoring too many people of the same group, district or area; and we need to be careful that we don't use service sponsorship as a tool to take control of the A.A. entity where our sponsees are contributing their service work.

"I am responsible" as a trusted servant to uphold the principle of rotation by making sure that my actions in performing a service commitment are honest, accountable and transparent; that I don't, through subtle actions, try to govern or have control of the A.A. entity I'm serving; that when I rotate out of a service position, I leave the new trusted servants to perform their duties without me trying to exercise control by implying that the way I did things was the best and, perhaps, the only way to do them. As a trusted servant, I'm responsible for being there when (and if) asked to share my experience; to ensure that no one is denied the opportunity of service by my trying to hang on to too many service positions. And I am responsible to exercise good judgment, patience and diplomacy when dealing with contentious issues, to be a unifier instead of a divider.

*Fredy M., Western Ontario*

# Contributions

## Apathy and Power of the Purse

Hello, my name is Kelly L., and it is my honor and privilege to represent Northern Illinois Area 20 as Panel 66 delegate. I would like to thank Mary Clare for sending me the loving invitation to give this presentation on "Apathy and Power of the Purse."

I wasn't sure how to present this topic; the first thing my service sponsor said was to brush up on Concept VII. I really didn't want to do the entire presentation on Concept VII, since it would be preaching to the choir. But the second part of the Concept states, "It is further understood that the Conference Charter itself is not a legal document: that it relies instead upon the force of tradition and the power of the A.A. purse for its final effectiveness."

The bylaws of the General Service Board are a legal instrument, and the General Service Conference is the real seat of ultimate authority, with the delegates having a two-thirds majority.

So, the question to ask is: Do we act responsibly regarding the "power of the purse"?

The Concept addresses group contributions, and it ties in to this year's Conference theme of "Supporting Our Future." Voluntary contributions are obviously a big part of Alcoholics Anonymous's future. *Apathy* is not to be confused with *empathy*, which is the showing of emotion. *Apathy* is the lack of emotions or interest. *Power* is the ability to do, or influence, and *the purse* is finances and money.

Is there a lack of interest in the ability to provide for A.A.'s finances?

Tradition Seven is, "Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions," which places the responsibility for supporting A.A. headquarters directly upon A.A. members. Bare running expenses plus a prudent reserve is headquarters' policy.

Most of my meetings add little statements after reading the Seventh Tradition, such as: "We have expenses such as rent, coffee, and literature; helping the still-suffering alcoholic; and supporting the services of A.A." Another meeting mentions that the Seventh Tradition is more than simply paying for rent and other group expenses: it is both a privilege and a responsibility of the groups and individual members to ensure that our organization, at every level, remains forever self-supporting and free of outside influences that might divert us from our primary purpose. For me it is a privilege and a responsibility because of all who came before me and who helped make it possible for me to have a Big Book and various other helpful publications.

When I first started coming to A.A. — before I actually got sober — I would not put any money in the basket because I thought I wasn't going to stay. I am glad no one got on my case about it because maybe I wouldn't have come back. When I did come back to stay, I would put money in the basket because others did. I knew we had the rent and other group expenses, but I was not aware of the "what" and "why" of the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Everything in A.A., from how to start a meeting to being a G.S.R. and sponsoring others, depends on effective communication. I am finding out that communication is one of the liabilities of A.A. service. When I got involved in general service I found out that there was a whole other world of alcoholics beyond my meetings.

The Feasibility Study done last year on communication, expenses and revenue was an eye-opener for many, myself included.

Whenever our groups are told that the answering service, district or area needs money, they are sure to put them at the top of the list when it comes time to send out money. Many members do not understand what is involved at the G.S.O. It is up to good sponsorship and trusted servants in general service to let others know of all 36 principles, not just the first 12.

When members read or hear of the "power of the purse," it is as if some type of imaginary power goes through their heads. Some complain about the high price of literature, and they actually say, "If they don't lower the cost of the Big Book, then we won't send any money; we have the power of the purse," not really understanding that the less you buy literature and the less you support G.S.O., the more the prices go up.

Since coming back from the Conference last year with all my interesting notes and literature, I have been trying to explain but not preach the importance of supporting our General Service Office.

If there is no General Service Office, then there is no A.A. literature of any kind, including service materials, and there is no Grapevine and no A.A. website to help people find meetings around the U.S. and Canada.

A good thing about Alcoholics Anonymous is that members are always trying to find better and easier ways to reach the ones who have not yet found us, since we know from personal experience that being an active alcoholic is a very lonely and toxic life. Unfortunately, they don't seem to be aware of the cost of those services. When I came into A.A., I was told that it was time for me to start paying my own way and become a person of good standing in society.

"I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible." Thank you for allowing me to serve Alcoholics Anonymous.

*Kelly L., Northern Illinois*

## Fully Self-Supporting Our Obligations

Greetings and welcome, all of you, to our 67th General Service Conference. I am truly grateful to be a part of our "service in action" with all of you this week. My name is Kelly D., Area 35 Northern Minnesota, Panel 66 delegate. Thank you for the honor and privilege to present on the topic "Fully Self-Supporting Our Obligations."

When I first started preparing this presentation, I decided to go to the dictionary to define some of the words in the topic to truly get the meaning of what that topic is saying to us. This is how it reads with its definitions: "Completely or entirely having the resources to be able to survive without outside assistance and with a sense of duty." With that full definition of this topic, the questions I feel we need to ask ourselves are these: Why are we not self-supporting in Alcoholics Anonymous? Do we have the resources available to survive without outside assistance? And, lastly, do we make it our sense of duty?

I think it is important to share with you some history on self-support from the "Historical Background on Self-Support" found on our A.A. website:

> In 1947, Bill said, "Voluntary contributions or pledges of A.A. members ought to be A.A.'s principal support, and, eventually, its sole support." Although it was necessary in the beginning when A.A. desperately needed a little outside help (which, he noted, made possible the Alcoholic Foundation, the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* and the General Service Office), times had now changed. He sensed "a very powerful feeling… spreading among us that A.A. ought not to be takers from society, any longer. Instead, let us be givers." Additionally, the news that every A.A. group had become self-supporting would create invaluable goodwill in the outside world.
>
> The General Headquarters, predecessor to G.S.O., published a monthly newsletter for distribution to the Fellowship. In the February 1949 issue, the purpose of voluntary contributions was defined: 1. To meet the expenses of General Headquarters, which operated a plan of service to alcoholics the world over, in keeping with A.A.'s primary purpose (it was described as international Twelfth Step work); and 2. To meet those expenses of General Headquarters incurred in its operations as a coordinating center for all A.A. groups. The article emphasized the voluntary nature of the contributions; they were "not dues or fees." It also stated that such contributions would "be used for A.A. operating expenses only."
>
> In September 1950, lack of voluntary contributions led Bill to issue to the Fellowship a five-page plea for support, including a request that the group secretaries call a special business meeting for the purpose of reading his (Bill's) written plea. "Without A.A.'s Services we'd often fumble that new man or woman just coming in the door; without our Services, we'd certainly spoil the main chance of those millions who don't yet know."
>
> In November 1957, Bill wrote a Grapevine article entitled "Respecting Money," in which he juxtaposed outside contributions and self-support: "Our spiritual way of life is safe for future generations if, as a society, we resist the temptation to receive money from the outside world. But this leaves us with a responsibility — one that every member ought to understand. We cannot skimp when the treasurer of our group passes the hat. Our groups, our areas, and A.A. as a whole will not function unless our services are sufficient and our bills paid."
>
> Ten years later, as if in conclusion, Bill wrote in the A.A. Grapevine, "Both these principles we understand:

that A.A. wants no charity; that we support our own services. We understand — but we sometimes forget."

Bill's writings on self-support are pretty clear on the principles "that A.A. wants no charity; that we support our own services." Our Seventh Tradition also states that "[e]very A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions." As you know, our gross profits from A.A. literature sales currently make up over 50% of G.S.O. income (which does not make us self-supporting), and only 40% of the groups in the U.S. and Canada listed at G.S.O. contribute. What can we do to change this?

Through my experience in A.A. service, I see that we lack in communicating and educating all our groups on why it is important that we give — why it is our responsibility as A.A. members. We must not forget the importance of carrying our message of hope to the alcoholic who still suffers and that it requires money to do so on all levels of our service structure. So, do we have the resources to be able to survive without outside assistance? That answer is simple: yes. We have a lot of literature available to us as a resource to use to educate all members in A.A. and to work toward becoming self-supporting.

Three great items are the pamphlets "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix," "Idea Starters" (for shared experience of members and areas) and "Self-Support Talking Points" (compiled jointly by the trustees' and Conference Finance committees, with input from areas, the A.A.W.S. Finance Committee and A.A. members), which are all part of the Self-Support Packet available to all of us and put together specifically to help us understand its importance.

I believe the change to becoming fully self-supporting can start with each and every one of us A.A. members here today. Are we willing to make a commitment to leave this Conference and to go back to our areas, districts and groups and talk about self-support through discussions, workshops and presentations? Isn't it our obligation and our sense of duty as members of Alcoholics Anonymous to do so?

In closing, let me bring your attention to our theme for this Conference: "Supporting Our Future." I would like to leave you with another thought: What can we do — and what are we willing to do — to support the future of Alcoholics Anonymous?

Keep in mind the words I read earlier from the 1957 Grapevine article entitled "Respecting Money": "Our spiritual way of life is safe for future generations if, as a society, we resist the temptation to receive money from the outside world. But this leaves us with a responsibility — one that every member ought to understand. We cannot skimp when the treasurer of our group passes the hat."

We do have a responsibility in Alcoholics Anonymous "that every member ought to understand," as Bill wrote. Let's all work together for the good of A.A. and for the future generations to come to fulfill that responsibility as members, by giving and educating others so that we can be fully self-supporting through our own contributions.

Thank you all for your commitment, love and service to Alcoholics Anonymous and for the opportunity to be a part of this 2017 General Service Conference with all of you.

*Kelly D., Northern Minnesota*

## Spirituality and Money

It has been said that A.A. is a sort of spiritual kindergarten. *Spirituality* is defined as "a search for the sacred, personal growth, blissful experience, or an encounter with one's own inner dimension." The appendix on spiritual experience in the back of our Big Book describes it as "an unsuspected inner resource" or "God-consciousness."

The fact that I was sober was the first proof I had of divine intervention. If God was willing to relieve me of the self-destructive obsession to drink, then maybe I could trust Him further. I started to form my own understanding of God and began to believe that I might be able to get my foot in the door of spirituality.

When I realized that I had been given a part in helping others avert misery and death, I was shocked at the enormity of the gift and at the awesome responsibility. That changed my priorities. My past was no longer a waste, as I had felt it to be before; rather, it held real meaning for others and for me. I began to put A.A.'s principles to daily use.

After becoming stable in A.A., I began a life of service to others. My entry into general service began in my second year of sobriety. I started to put A.A. first in many ways. As I sacrificed my own fantasies for my life and embraced the A.A. way, I found new friends and discovered to my delight I no longer worried about financial security. In fact, my business prospered while I continued to put A.A. first. I saw this as sure proof that God wanted me taking care of His business while He took care of mine.

In the 1960 Grapevine article "Freedom Under God: The Choice Is Ours," our co-founder Bill W. said, "The future would... lack its full use and meaning did it not bring us fresh problems and even acute perils — problems and perils through which we can grow into true greatness of action and spirit." As we practice the principles, we exercise our spiritual muscles, increasing our courage while building a history of faith that can sustain and prosper us. If our best days lie ahead, it then stands to reason that A.A.'s best days must lie ahead also.

Yet how can we who live one day at a time even contemplate the future, much less prepare for it? Our Conference theme, "Supporting Our Future," seems to challenge Tradition Seven, which says, and I quote from the "Twelve and Twelve," page 165, "Bare running expenses plus a prudent reserve would henceforth be the Foundation's financial policy." Our vow of corporate poverty prevents abuse and ensures accountability to those we serve. Yet our Tradition prohibits us from supporting tomorrow's A.A. with today's money. Giving our money, however, is one way to guarantee that those serving us will continue to do so and that potential service workers will not balk at joining that effort.

More importantly, supporting our services allows us to reach those we otherwise could not. The General Service Office reaches around the world with A.A. activity in 180 countries. It reaches into the offices and conference rooms of professionals. It reaches into prisons and out to sea

for Loners. It creates videos and literature and maintains websites, all things we as individuals could never do. Our areas and local committees use the tools developed by the General Service Board and the General Service Office to likewise reach those we otherwise could not.

As a businessman, I view money as a tool, one that can leverage a much larger outcome. It is so in A.A., as money goes further here than anywhere, saving lives by the score all over the planet. No one can deny our impact on the disease of alcoholism. We are first and foremost the most effective program the world has ever seen. Our literature reaches out in many languages to many cultures with a lifeline of hope to those who would otherwise be lost. Our General Service Office does such a wide variety of services it's hard to comprehend.

On the last page of *As Bill Sees It,* Bill writes, "This is the legacy of world-service responsibility that we vanishing oldtimers are leaving to you, the A.A.s of today and tomorrow. We know that you will guard, support, and cherish this world legacy as the greatest collective responsibility that A.A. has or ever can have." We must embrace our primary purpose while being prudent with our resources.

As a farmer, I can tell you that a small sack of seed can give you a meal for a week, but if planted and nurtured, it can feed dozens for months. If we seed A.A. with our money and nurture it with our time, attention and love for our fellows, we will do our part to ensure its future.

*Bub B., Mississippi*

## International

### A.A. Around the World

My name is Mary, I am an alcoholic and I am grateful to be a member of staff at the General Service Office. Currently I have the privilege of serving on the International desk. It is a thrilling assignment, with a front-row seat to the continuing development of A.A. around the world, and I am delighted to share with you today.

Rick's loving invitation specified five minutes for this topic... What an order!

The International desk is the contact point at G.S.O. for those residing outside of Canada and the United States. Each day correspondence arrives from around the world. Sometimes I do not even recognize the language, yet we are so lucky to have wonderful online tools that can quickly solve those questions. Correspondence comes from the 62 countries that have their own general service office and service structures, each of them autonomous, as well as from groups and members in approximately 120 other countries where A.A. has a presence. That presence could be a single member, a few groups, or perhaps an A.A. service structure that is beginning to evolve with an intergroup or two.

The number of countries with an A.A. presence changes; the A.A. presence can be fragile in some countries, as members move or perhaps get drunk. There are still countries where there is no A.A., and others where there are vast distances between meetings and members. Recently I received an email from a member in Dakar, Senegal, who wrote to let us know that the group there had closed, sharing "the friend who kept the group alive died and the others are gone" and that she plans to start another group. I was able to share some experience and let her know that we will be happy to send her some complimentary literature to aid in her Twelfth Step efforts.

There are several opportunities for representatives from established structures to share face to face on the national level. Our trustees-at-large are our delegates to the World Service Meeting and this year Scott and our new trustee-at-large will represent the U.S. and Canada at our zonal meeting, the Meeting of the Americas, also called the REDELA (Reunión de las Américas). G.S.O. management and staff are invited to the zonal meetings as observers and resources. Zonal meetings, in addition to the Meeting of the Americas, include the Sub-Saharan Africa Service Meeting, the Asia-Oceania Service Meeting, and the European Service Meeting. These meetings have the same primary purpose as any gathering of A.A. and activities revolve around sharing experience, strength and hope. Zonal meetings often take place in countries where A.A. is emerging, helping those countries to connect with other countries or areas in their part of the world where A.A. is more established. I will always remember hearing the delegates from India share their detailed P.I/C.P.C. plan for carrying the message to every state in every language spoken in their country. India currently has an estimated 30,000 A.A. members and 1,650 A.A. groups and a population of 1.4 billion people.

We may also be invited to national events, such as a General Service Conference or a convention.

Last November, trustee-at-large/U.S. Bob W. and I went to Costa Rica to observe their 38th National Convention, which is what they call their General Service Conference. Before the conference began, we were invited to attend a meeting of the

General Service Board of Costa Rica. Bob and I listened as they discussed the situation surrounding the recent theft of funds by a past employee of 17 years, which put them in a difficult financial position. As a board, they discussed how they should communicate what happened to the delegates during the conference. Bob and I were able to share experiences from our structure of a similar nature, suggesting that they share honestly about what happened and what they planned to do in the future to prevent any reoccurrence. We also reminded them of Warranty Five in Concept Twelve, should such a time arise to address the situation with their past employee.

All in all, they faced this situation very responsibly and were grateful for our input and participation, and it was remarkable to see the spiritual maturity of their Conference grounded in the Steps, Traditions and Concepts as they heard detailed reports and discussed the difficulties that had occurred at their General Service Office.

You might be interested to know that their conference takes place over three days and is held at a rural retreat center. They engage a kitchen crew that provides delicious home-cooked meals and snacks prepared on an immense wood-fired stove. It was fascinating to observe another country's conference and how remarkably similar it was to our gathering this week. They discussed social media and our Traditions, self-support, adoption of the "style" of the U.S./Canada *Service Manual* and other familiar topics.

Last year Bob and Scott observed the 44th General Service Conference of Germany and Scott traveled to the 38th Convention of Central America. International trips so far this year include the General Service Conference of Cuba and the celebration of 55 years of A.A. in Barbados, with trips to the National Convention of A.A. in Peru and the National Convention of A.A. in Bolivia coming in the fall. International trips are intended to help to carry the message and to further our relations with A.A. structures that express a need for shared experience.

A.A. literature carries the message internationally, too. Working through G.S.O.'s publishing department, A.A. as a whole carries the message in ways that our groups and we as individual A.A. members could not do on our own. The Publishing Department is constantly coordinating additional translations to carry the message around the world. The International desk also responds to requests for literature assistance from outside the U.S. and Canada. In the past year, countries we have sent literature to include Cuba, Malawi, Nigeria and Bangladesh.

We also provide literature upon request to professionals all over the world, and try to connect them with A.A. locally; our nonalcoholic friends are a vital part of the growth of A.A. around the world. Recently, I sent literature to a military health care professional at Guantanamo Bay who wanted to keep the group there going.

The Internet is also playing an important role in making the A.A. message available around the world. When Mekkonen Y. wrote to let us know about the formation of the first Amharic-speaking group in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, he identified himself as his group's general service representative. This A.A. group developed independent of any English-speaking ex-pat A.A. members. Most of you here are probably familiar with G.S.O.'s A.A. website, www.aa.org; now imagine the time Mekkonen spent on the website to learn what a G.S.R. is — and then he did exactly what G.S.R.s do: he connected his group with A.A. as a whole with the desire to carry the message! It is impossible to calculate the power of making our literature available on aa.org.

Bill W. wrote after a trip overseas visiting A.A.'s in numerous countries, "This was no merely interesting comparison of mutual experiences and aspirations. This was far more; this was communication of heart to heart in wonder, in joy and in everlasting gratitude." (*The Language of the Heart*, p. 250)

It is impossible to express my gratitude for the opportunity to witness firsthand the language of the heart expressed as members around the world carry the message with the hope that the hand of A.A. will someday be there for every alcoholic.

*Mary C., G.S.O. staff*

## The 24th World Service Meeting

### One World, One A.A., One Language of the Heart

The 24th World Service Meeting was held this past October 23–27 at the Hilton Westchester Hotel in Rye Brook, New York. Sixty World Service Delegates were in attendance representing more than 41 countries. I am extremely honored and humbled to have represented our U.S./Canadian structure along with my fellow trustee-at-large/Canada and friend, Scott H.

The World Service Meeting is held every two years — one year here in New York and the other is awarded by bid from a participating country, so it can be held in various locations throughout the world. The purpose of the World Service Meeting is to provide a forum for countries to share their experience of how A.A. is working within their structures. This forum provides enormous opportunities for participating countries to strengthen A.A. in their lands by learning from the success stories of others.

The U.S. and Canada provide the principal planning and organizing of this event. The week is well-organized with a varied schedule consisting of country highlights, workshops, presentations, committee meetings and sharing sessions. This varied format allows for countries to get a very real sense of how Alcoholics Anonymous is working around the world.

Much of the work of the World Service Meeting is achieved through its four committees, which are Agenda, Literature/Publishing, Policy/Admissions/Finance and Working with Others. I was assigned to the Policy/Admissions/Finance Committee and served as its chair. These committees review items related to their respective scopes that ultimately increase participation, ensure the integrity of the translation of our literature and share experience on effectively carrying the A.A. message.

One of the high points of the World Service Meeting are the Country Service Highlights, where each country is

invited to give a three-minute presentation of their history, structure and how A.A. is reaching those in need. Many seemed to have missed the memo on the three-minute time limit and went on and on and on! This didn't bother me though; I could listen to the development of A.A. around the world all day long!

Qualifications for countries to participate in the World Service Meeting are fairly minimal, asking only that countries have either an operating General Service Board and/or a literature distribution center, which could be an intergroup or General Service Office or variation of the two. This year we welcomed two new countries, which was so heartwarming to see. They were Paraguay and Slovakia.

Much of the success and effectiveness of our A.A. program is attributable to the very personal experience when one alcoholic takes time with another and shares their experience, strength and hope. We often call this sponsorship. In a very similar way, many countries around the world sponsor other countries and the World Service Meeting encourages these relationships. I'd like to highlight a story of this type of sponsorship that the delegate from Poland shared with us.

In 2015, Poland had learned Moldova had only two established groups. Recognizing A.A. had found its way there 25 years earlier, Poland decided to reach out to Moldova and share its experience with them. They invited a few Moldavian members to participate in Poland's National Service Conference and Nationwide Workshops for Corrections. This established a connection between them and led to five Polish members making a journey to Moldova to conduct a sponsorship workshop in Kishinev. Growing enthusiasm because of these meetings brought about a delegation of 25 members from Poland, Romania, Estonia, Ukraine and even Scotland, which journeyed to Moldova to join in the celebration of their 25th anniversary. While there, they conducted workshops on A.A. structure, the importance of the Seventh Tradition and A.A. Unity. The importance of the participation from so many visiting countries was very helpful with communication because of the many languages spoken in Moldova, but most importantly, in offering sponsorship to individual members.

The journey to and from Moldova is very tiresome — 20 hours by bus each way in addition to three hours to pass through each border. Poland's leadership along with the participation of these other countries to carry the message into Moldova is a very concrete example of being willing to go to any lengths to carry the message. The best part of this story is, today there are six groups in Moldova and they now have an established intergroup! I look forward to hearing of their participation at their first World Service Meeting someday!

As the Fellowship has found its way to new lands, our literature has always led the way. In 1991, the beginnings of the International Literature Fund started when participating countries of the World Service Meeting cooperated by raising funds to offset the cost of start-up literature for countries not able to finance their own. Since its inception, contributions of more than $1.6 million have been received, allowing our literature to be translated, produced and put into the hands of so many suffering alcoholics throughout the world. This fund is under the purview of the Literature/Publishing Committee of the World Service Meeting and gives A.A.W.S. the latitude to prioritize the use of these funds as they often facilitate this process.

Each participating country brings much of its translated literature and is displayed at the literature table which is a staple at each World Service Meeting. Seeing our literature translated into so many languages is tangible evidence of the good work of the World Service Meeting.

Similar to what we experience here, many tight bonds are made among the World Service delegates. By the end of the week I felt so connected to everyone in the room. In all my A.A. travels throughout the world, I have experienced firsthand how alike we all are and that our disease knows no boundaries. This fact was more apparent than ever throughout this week. Certainly here, we were people who ordinarily would not mix; but we all stood together, united for one purpose: to fulfill our responsibility to be sure the hand of Alcoholics Anonymous is available to anyone, anywhere who reaches out for help.

We closed the 24th World Service Meeting by joining hands and reciting the Serenity Prayer in 28 languages, a truly awesome experience.

*Bob W., trustee-at-large/U.S.*

## A.A. Grapevine and La Viña

### Why Grapevine? Why La Viña?

I am deeply excited to be here with all of you this weekend. I love this Fellowship and am so grateful to all of you for the ongoing sacrifice, service and leadership you provide to Alcoholics Anonymous.

I believe we are living through a shift in how A.A. communicates and I believe the work many of you do will directly affect the path that this history forms as we continue into our bright and hopeful future.

My goal today is to talk about the ongoing exploration and development at Grapevine of multimedia tools. That requires a little history, some process and some practical realities. It also requires dialogue, so I hope we will have time for discussion, questions and imagination.

Let's recap what we heard from our Grapevine Board chair:

- Average print circulation for Grapevine and La Viña are level, but growth is needed!
- Grapevine's online subscriptions continue to be steady.
- We are at the beginning of a website update to improve the experience for our visitors with the goal and potential to increase Grapevine's online subscription base.
- Grapevine app sales continue to grow since its launch in May 2016, with Kindle and Microsoft 10 coming soon.
- Content related items are ahead of projections — *Our Twelve Traditions*, a Grapevine anthology of members' experiences with the Twelve Traditions, has enjoyed tremendous support this year.

- Each of you has received a copy of our latest Grapevine book, entitled *Making Amends,* and a reprint of La Viña's *Lo Mejor de La Viña.*
- As the result of actions from your groups, areas and regions we have seen positive changes in subscriptions. This in combination with great efforts by management and our small staff finding savings in operations have allowed A.A. Grapevine, Inc. to transfer more than $750,000 in excess working capital into the Reserve Fund over the last three years.

There is much more to do, but this is a great start.

So, please take a minute and think about how and where you get information and share it today.

A.A. Grapevine, Inc. publishes for both print and digital now, but what about those who don't read long form content? How many in and out of the Fellowship look for and utilize content in other ways? Visual ways. Or audio. Or video.

Now, imagine if the Grapevine board announced:

- An anonymous weekly A.A. Grapevine podcast featuring conversations with members all over North America.
- Opportunities to broadcast from local service get-togethers and events, and sharing our experience, strength and hope through platforms like Audible and the Apple store.
- A new blog on Tumblr that is written and moderated by the Grapevine office with guest contributors from our service structure or A.A. historians or friends of A.A.

What if this were supported by social channels for Grapevine featuring running content of photos and videos submitted by the Fellowship and curated at the Grapevine office? What if all of this were easily shareable?

Imagine aagrapevine.org having regional-focused pages, stories translated into short videos, photo walls of anonymous sober art and content or an anonymity-protected discussion forum.

Imagine if we published true multimedia content streaming through a revamped aagrapevine.org with embeddable tools so that information could be more easily found out in the world, or your regions could embed any piece of content they find useful into district, area or intergroup websites.

Can you imagine the benefit to A.A.'s communications?

Can you also imagine the amount of discussion, debate and agreement that would be needed to create a fully connected network like this.

Staffing. Finances. Submissions. Coordination. Cooperation. Trust. Unity.

So, how did we get here? How did a newsletter that was originally compiled by a committee of four volunteers become the international journal of A.A., eventually including a magazine in Spanish and other content related items in many mediums providing a lifeline for personal recovery and Twelfth Step work?

I agree with what Bill W. wrote in his letter to Royal Shepard (the nonalcoholic lawyer drawing up the Grapevine's original corporate charter) in 1946: "The

Grapevine should become the voice of A.A. as a whole." The letter included Bill's detailed vision about how Grapevine should function and what he hoped it would become: "The Grapevine staff should be primarily responsible to group opinion and tradition." It established the premise of editorial autonomy, "The Grapevine Editor should be the ultimate judge of what is to be printed," and ensured that the pages ought to include all points of view and experience from within our diverse culture of sober alcoholics, "The Grapevine should feel free to print articles expressing the widest differences of opinion on all topics of a strictly A.A. nature," including news from the outside perspective of professionals and friends with whom we actively cooperate. "The Grapevine should have freedom to print news articles relative to the whole field of alcoholism, excepting, however, those which might provoke needless dissension." It made the corporate board ultimately responsible for the integrity of the content and the corporation's finances: "The Alcoholic Foundation will guarantee the integrity of the Grapevine but will exercise no managerial control except in time of difficulty," while always maintaining A.A. Grapevine's editorial freedom as paramount, "The Grapevine will enjoy perfect freedom of speech on all matters directly pertaining to Alcoholics Anonymous."

When Bill and Bob passed on their voice in A.A. policy to the Fellowship by creating our Conference structure, they also passed on the medium for the voices of the entire Fellowship to share contemporary experience, strength and hope in Grapevine and now La Viña, too.

Our Conference has affirmed this need repeatedly: In 1968, when an Advisory Action was approved affirming

that Grapevine is the voice of individual A.A. members and should continue to publish individual experience and opinion; and six years later, when the Conference reaffirmed this action; and in 1986, when our Conference recognized Grapevine as the international journal of A.A., and by extension, La Viña.

In 2003, the important service provided by Grapevine and La Viña reps was recognized and the content produced by Grapevine was defined as a vital tool. And in 2011, the need to expand into digital platforms was recognized.

The General Service Conference is the voice of the group conscience of A.A. as whole. The voice of policy.

Grapevine is, and always has been intended to be, a reflection of the collective voices of contemporary A.A. experience. It's where we find out how other members, or groups or regions do it. It is our community reflected back to us in print, online and anywhere else we can find to take that message.

While a given issue or story may not depict exactly how my group does it, or a given article may not reflect how I personally stay sober, for the member who submits that experience, it is their truth. There is no more accurate depiction of present day A.A. as whole anywhere else. And it is a representation of the Fellowship out into the world of nonalcoholics, too.

In addition to news, updates and topics on which we all fundamentally agree, we can discuss a wide variety of things, as these are reflections of A.A. experience and should be available in any medium that will help carry our message to our entire Fellowship, as well as to the rest of the world where there is a suffering alcoholic or friend of A.A. From this perspective, Grapevine Inc.'s corporate charter offers a broad mandate.

Here is a shorthand version:

Think about that list we imagined. Or your own great ideas about how to make improvements in A.A.'s communications and services. The process is often one of trial and error. Collaboration is key. Feedback and adjustments are essential.

We don't move as nimbly as technology or other modern-day businesses. We do not have angel investors or outside contributions. Our service corporations are not autonomous but responsible to the will of the Fellowship. We have the group conscience. We rely on the requests and suggestions of need from our Fellowship. The simple idea is suddenly not so simple when held up against our process, the average budget and healthy ongoing debate year after year.

We are a spiritual organization founded on the principles of love, trust, tolerance, compassion, unity and self-support.

Essentially, Grapevine was social media before there was "social media." And A.A. Grapevine, Inc. has the ability to do some things that A.A.W.S., Inc. cannot.

There is potential to build a digital community that could alleviate many current concerns over financial challenges and increase new membership and participation among less-connected members.

But to do that we need you. We need your suggestions. We need your active participation in the group conscience and our Conference process. We need your resumes when there is a call for staff, or appointed committee members or directors. We need your help carrying the message with Grapevine and La Viña.

If you don't have a subscription, please get one. If you don't want to read the magazines, give a subscription to a friend, sponsee or someone in jail or a treatment facility. If you don't know who to give a subscription to, get a Carry the Message Gift Certificate and give it to your area chair for distribution to local committees.

Look into the anthologies that A.A. Grapevine, Inc. produces and use them in your home groups. The Grapevine Online Subscription is serving a small, stable community, but we can't invest in any improvements without a larger active user base.

So, if you are interested in making a contribution to the Grapevine, subscribe to Grapevine Online or GV Complete and take full advantage of unique content such as audio versions of the magazine and our archive.

The new Grapevine App was launched and given to the delegates at last year's General Service Conference. It's Android and Apple compatible, with Microsoft 10 and Kindle Fire coming soon. It was developed to be a simple way to read the magazine on phones/tablets with slim financial resources.

This is a great tool. It is directly comparable to every other professional magazine app, with apples to apples functionality, and it works great. If you like to read on your phone or tablet, it's a cheaper subscription price than the magazine.

We are already looking at potential updates to include audio for those that don't want to read.

Download it to your phone right now if you haven't already. Sample a free magazine or audio story and watch A.A.'s latest PSA.

Together we can grow the Grapevine community; we can evolve that community with current communication practices and be of greater service to the Fellowship overall, as well as to alcoholics not yet reached.

*Josh E., Grapevine director*

# Reports from the General Service Board, A.A.W.S., and Grapevine Corporate Boards

## General Service Board Report

Greetings and welcome to the 67th General Service Conference, especially to those who are attending for the first time. This week, as we put the Conference plan into action, we will be addressing a wide range of agenda items that have arisen throughout the Fellowship in the U.S. and Canada. Ours is the structure this week — and, indeed, throughout the entire year — that takes the place of government in A.A., that ensures that the full voice of A.A. will be heard, whether it represents the great majority or a minority. This Conference plan was established 67 years ago as a guarantee that our movement-wide services would continue to function under all conditions, providing a practical successor to our beloved co-founders.

Thus, we are embarking together on a spiritual adventure this week, under the theme "Supporting Our Future" — a theme with particular relevance as we focus on what lies ahead for the Fellowship, keeping firmly in our hearts and minds the lessons of the past and the requirements of the present.

The General Service Board has met four times since our last Conference: for the annual members meeting in April and quarterly board meetings in August, November and February, and as I review some of the highlights of those meetings, I would also like to call your attention to the in-depth reports of the 11 trustees' committees that appear in your Conference Manuals and will provide greater detail into the work we have undertaken throughout the year.

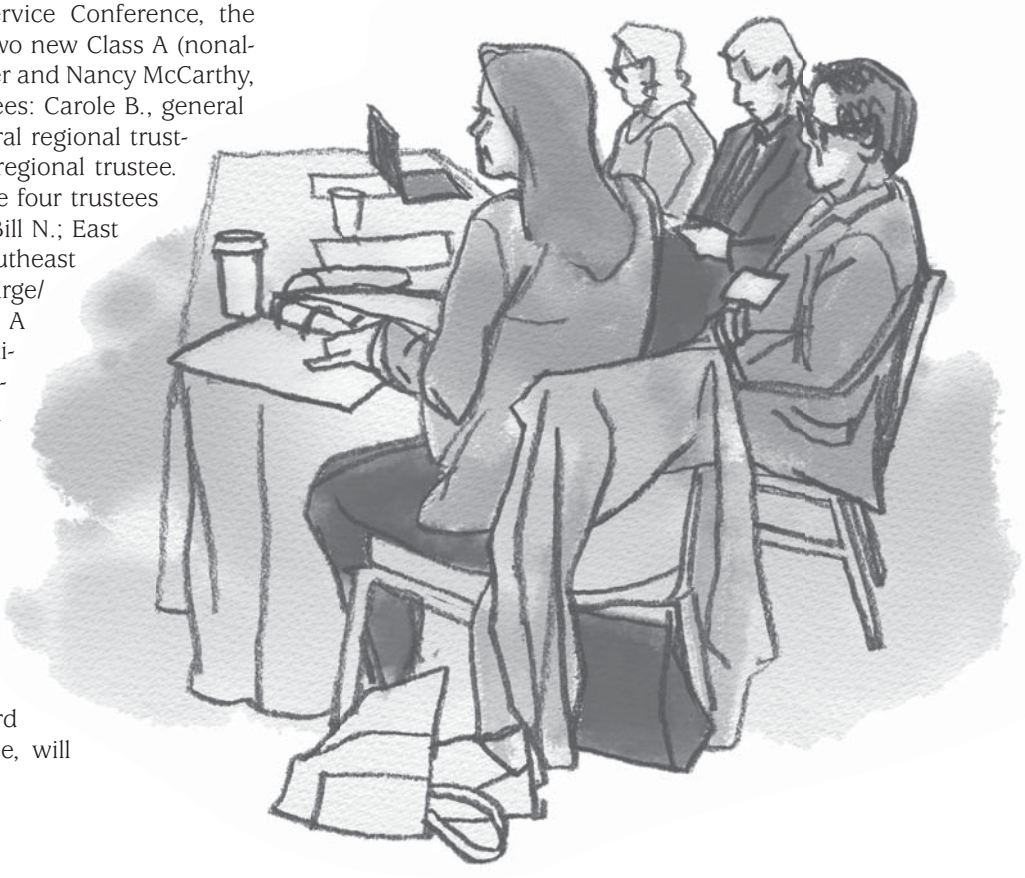
Following the 2016 General Service Conference, the General Service Board welcomed two new Class A (nonalcoholic) trustees, Christine Carpenter and Nancy McCarthy, along with three new Class B trustees: Carole B., general service trustee; Tom A., West Central regional trustee; and Cate W., Western Canada regional trustee. At the end of this year's Conference four trustees will rotate: general service trustee Bill N.; East Central regional trustee Bill F.; Southeast regional trustee Chet P.; trustee-at-large/U.S. Bob W.; and myself, a Class A trustee. We are grateful for the dedication, self-sacrifice and tireless service these trustees have exhibited on behalf of the Fellowship. Sadly, we also note the passing of Joe D., general service trustee and recent chair of A.A.W.S., Inc. Gratefully, we were able to hold two memorials for Joe, recognizing his service and contributions both at the A.A.W.S. meeting in January and at the January General Service Board Weekend. Graciously, Richard B., Eastern Canada regional trustee, will serve on the A.A.W.S. Board for an additional year to fill the vacancy left by Joe's death.

New trustee slates of corporate officers will be presented later in the week, for disapproval if any, and we are happy to be putting forward the name of Michele Grinberg, Class A, to succeed me as chairperson of the General Service Board. Michele is familiar to many of us in her prior time on the board and we look forward gratefully to the service which is still to come.

On the G.S.O. front, a number of longtime A.A.W.S. employees retired in 2016: order entry manager Andrea Brennan after 38 years; managing editor Eleanor W. after 34 years; contributions clerk Winsome Ricketts after 29 years; accounts receivable clerk Lauren Robertson after 26 years; staff member Mary Clare L. after 13 years; and staff assistant Nadine Baker after eight years. To these we express our gratitude and best wishes as they move on to new endeavors.

Additionally, early in 2017, G.S.O.'s longtime controller, Don Meurer (nonalcoholic) retired at the end of February after more than 35 years of devoted service to the Fellowship, providing critical financial information and support to the A.A. World Services, A.A. Grapevine and General Service Boards and offering consistent guidance in every aspect of the Fellowship's finances.

The last year also saw a number of promotions, reorganizations and new hires. Among these, Albin Z., former general service trustee, came on board at the end of 2016 as G.S.O.'s director of administration and staff ser-



vices; Bob Slotterback (nonalcoholic) was promoted to director of finance and accounting; Malini Singh (nonalcoholic) stepped into the new position of publishing operations manager; and Ames S. was hired as G.S.O. managing editor.

The past year has also marked the first full year of Grapevine's relocation to the 11th floor at 475 Riverside Drive, as the G.S.O./Grapevine co-location project has moved through a series of construction phases, with completion expected in 2017.

The Grapevine Board has spent time over the past year doing strategic planning, continuing to develop organization-wide subscription outreach plans and programs and integrating new technology, always with the intention of finding new ways to reach the Fellowship. Carrying the A.A. message through Grapevine and La Viña remains the focus of the board and staff, and over the past year the two magazines have highlighted the experience, strength and hope of individual members on such important topics as: atheist and agnostic A.A. members, remote communities, emotional sobriety, letting go of resentments, making amends and having a home group. Grapevine recently published a new collection titled *Our Twelve Traditions,* in both print and e-book formats, and 2016 marked the 20th anniversary of La Viña, an event celebrated throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Since the 2016 General Service Conference, Regional Forums have been held in the Eastern Canada, Western Canada, Pacific and Southeast regions. The final "Additional" Forum was held for the Southwest Region in Denver, Colorado, and the Western Canada Regional Forum included a small celebration to mark the 200th Forum since their inception in 1975. More than 1,800 enthusiastic A.A. members participated, including more than 1,000 first-time attendees who learned more about the General Service Board, General Service Office and A.A. Grapevine.

On the international front, the 24th World Service Meeting was held October 23-27, 2016 in Rye Brook, New York with the theme "One World, One A.A., One Language of the Heart." In attendance were 60 delegates representing 41 countries or linguistic zones, including two countries attending for the first time, Paraguay and Slovakia. Representing our General Service Board were first-term delegate Scott H., trustee-at-large/Canada, and second-term delegate Bob W., trustee-at-large/U.S. G.S.O. general manager Greg T. presided, staff member Mary C. served as WSM coordinator, G.S.B. chair Terry Bedient offered opening and closing presentations, and staff members Racy J., Steve S. and Clay R. acted as committee secretaries. The Trustees recognize that the WSM has a significant impact on the unity of A.A. and on the effectiveness of our Twelfth Step efforts.

In 2016 trustees and staff members visited the 37th Central American Convention, the German General Service Conference and Costa Rica's 38th National Conference Meeting. Tentative international travel for 2017 includes the Cuban General Service Conference, the Barbados 55th Anniversary, the 6th National Convention of A.A. Peru, the 13th National Convention of A.A. Bolivia and the Zonal Meetings (Asia-Oceania Service Meeting, European Service Meeting, Sub-Saharan Africa Service Meeting and the REDELA — Meeting of the Americas).

Since the 66th General Service Conference, the General Service Board has held three General Sharing Sessions, which have covered the topics, "Communication," "A.A. Unity — Our Common Welfare," and "Trust, Authority and Reliability."

The most recent sharing session took place as part of the January 2017 Board Weekend, where the General Service Board welcomed Conference committee chairpersons and the Conference delegate chair to the General Service Board Weekend, as it has since 1991. During the weekend, delegate committee chairpersons attended an orientation at G.S.O., met with their committee staff secretaries, and participated in sessions of corresponding trustees' committees. The practice of inviting Conference committee chairs continues to benefit the Conference process in helping delegate chairs fulfill their responsibilities to the Conference and to A.A. as a whole.

Planning for the next International Convention in Detroit, Michigan, in 2020 is gaining steam, and the board has been addressing a number of questions focused on improving the effectiveness and overall experience of the Convention, reviewing past practices and making our best estimates for the future.

The objectives of the International Convention are:

- To provide opportunities for a rededication of attendees to the primary purpose of A.A.
- To enable attendees to witness the success and growth of the A.A. program around the world.
- To let the world know that A.A. is alive, flourishing and available as a community resource, locally and internationally.

And so, with gratitude we look forward to Detroit in 2020, and to Vancouver, British Columbia, in 2025.

One additional item I'd like to draw your attention to comes from the report of the trustees' Committee on Corrections, reflecting work done both in the Fellowship and through our committee structure.

The video "A New Freedom" — approved at the 66th General Service Conference and the culmination of a tremendous amount of hard work throughout the Fellowship — has been quite well-received. In addition to making the video widely available through our many local, district and area Corrections Committees, we have been monitoring the number of online views on aa.org, with the number reaching 856,770 for 2016 — well beyond 2016 numbers for the video "A.A. in Correctional Facilities." We're also happy to report recent progress made with the governmental agency Corrections Canada to reach members behind the walls in Canadian prisons and ongoing efforts to expand the Corrections Correspondence Service (C.C.S.) in Canada, along with additional efforts being made throughout the Fellowship in carrying the message to Native American/First Nations people both in tribal jails and other correctional facilities in the U.S. and Canada.

We look forward, as well, to another exciting development in 2017 — the first National Corrections Conference to be held in November in St. Louis.

Much of the board's focus over the past year has been on our current and projected financial position as a spiritual Fellowship, and the board's nonalcoholic Class A treasurer, David Morris, will provide an in-depth look at where we currently stand. The Seventh Tradition remains a cornerstone in any and all discussions about finance, and as we try to plot a stable fiscal course through the years ahead, its continuing importance cannot be overstated.

In 2016, the trustees approved a Strategic Plan. Titled simply "Serving the Fellowship," the Strategic Plan outlines the mission, vision and actions which will be taken by the General Service Board in fulfilling its responsibility to serve the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. At the July 2016 Board Weekend, the trustees began prioritizing the forty action processes of the Strategic Plan. Thirteen processes were assigned level 1 priority, 20 were assigned level 2 priority, seven were assigned level 3 priority, and three were assigned level 4 priority. Each level 1 priority was assigned a start date, a progress report date and a completion target. At the January 2017 Board Weekend, the trustees reviewed progress on the 13 priority 1 processes, determining that one was finalized with further action declined by the A.A.W.S. Board. In July, the trustees will receive progress reports on the remainder of the priority 1 action processes.

Additionally, on January 30, 2017, the complaint against A.A. World Services and the General Service Board in the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal was withdrawn. A.A.W.S. and G.S.B. made no settlement, monetary or nonmonetary, with the applicant.

Subsequently and separately, regarding this complaint, the applicant and the Greater Toronto Area Intergroup agreed to resolve their differences. Information about that agreement was publicly released by those parties and did not involve the General Service Board or the A.A.W.S. Board.

The issue of listing in our database intergroups that have outside affiliations arose during this time, was discussed in detail by the G.S.B. and A.A.W.S. Boards, and will be reported on fully in the A.A.W.S. Corporate Board report.

These, then, are just some of the highlights of a very active year — a year that has brought the future into greater focus and that culminates in the discussions that will take place here this week as we search for an informed group conscience on the many matters before us.

And so, as we begin our work, let us reaffirm our commitment to carrying A.A.'s lifesaving message. The General Service Conference is a gift passed on to us, and each of us has an obligation to keep the doors of A.A. open to those who so desperately need it — now and in the future — no matter who or where they are or what their background is. Our resolve to communicate effectively with each other and to bring forward what is best for the future of A.A. should be our guidepost and a measure of our success this week.

I look forward to an extremely productive and rewarding week. I sincerely thank you for the opportunity to serve this Fellowship.

*Terrance Bedient, chair of the General Service Board*

## Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.

Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. (A.A.W.S.) is a not-for-profit corporation composed of nine directors. Members of A.A.W.S., Inc. are the 21 trustees of the General Service Board, who elect the nine directors responsible for oversight of the General Service Office (G.S.O.), group services, printing and distribution of Conference-approved literature and service material. A.A.W.S. holds copyrights in A.A. literature and is responsible for translations of A.A. literature including titles licensed to A.A. boards in other countries.

A.A.W.S. directors include two general service trustees and two regional trustees; three nontrustee directors; G.S.O.'s general manager; and staff coordinator. Essential nonvoting support personnel attend each board meeting: G.S.O. services staff, finance director, publishing director, human resources director, G.S.O. archivist, board secretary, and others.

Each year, directors serving on Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. report to the General Service Conference on A.A. publishing, group services provided by G.S.O. and other activities linked directly to A.A.'s primary purpose. I am privileged to present this report on behalf of my fellow directors. The purpose of the publishing activities and group services provided by A.A.W.S. and G.S.O., as requested from the Fellowship, is to support members' and groups' Twelfth Step efforts to reach the still-suffering alcoholic. The structure, composition and responsibilities of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. are described in chapter 10 of *The A.A. Service Manual*.

The A.A.W.S. Board has met seven times since the 66th Conference to receive reports from G.S.O. management and staff, review updates on services, track progress on implementation of Conference and board recommendations related to A.A.W.S., review financial reports, price new and revised publications, consider publishing operations and G.S.O. administrative matters, discuss requests from A.A. members and non-A.A.s seeking permission to reprint A.A. copyrighted literature and to address other pertinent matters. (Concurrent with the seven board meetings, the A.A.W.S. Board met twice to conduct strategic planning sessions.)

The A.A.W.S. Board utilizes the committee system to address extensive agendas, to gather background material, and to consider requests of various kinds. The board, in turn, discusses committee reports and votes on any recommendations presented by a board committee in these reports. In addition, the board conducts long-range and strategic planning. Committees of the A.A.W.S. Board are: Technology/Communication/Services, which addresses the needs of service assignments, reviews G.S.O. communications with the Fellowship and oversees G.S.O.'s A.A. website; Publishing, which reviews sales results, format requests, reprints, international translations of literature and other publishing matters; Finance, which oversees

budgeting and financial results and considers self-support matters; and Nominating, which recommends candidates for A.A.W.S. nontrustee director and general service trustee vacancies.

*Group Services* — A net total of 1,020 new A.A. groups in the U.S. and Canada were listed at G.S.O. last year. Each new group's general service representative (G.S.R.) or contact receives A.A. literature and basic information to encourage the group to link with their local structure and support Twelfth Step activities. The service piece "Services Provided by G.S.O./A.A.W.S." describes in detail the services provided by the A.A. staff assignments and other employees at G.S.O.

*G.S.O.'s A.A. Website* — Oversight of G.S.O.'s A.A. website is the responsibility of the A.A.W.S. Board of Directors, acting through its Technology/Communication/Services and Publishing Committees and in accordance with the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. The website received a total of 13,327,469 visits for the year 2016, an increase of 4% from last year's total of 12,793,449. The highlights of new features include multiple navigation updates, an enhanced learning search feature, the new service piece, "Safety and A.A.: Our Common Welfare" and audio clips of Bill W.

Representatives from G.S.O. attended the National A.A. Technology Workshop held November 18-20 in Winston-Salem, NC. The purpose of this event is to share the message of Alcoholics Anonymous through technology to help the next alcoholic.

*Forums and Other Events* — Throughout the year, G.S.O. staff members are invited to attend and participate in many local and area service events, conferences and conventions. These trips help provide information about G.S.O. to A.A. gatherings and help staff to gather local experience to add to other collected experience available from G.S.O.

- *Regional Forums*: A.A.W.S. directors and G.S.O. staff participated in five Regional Forums in 2016: the "Additional" Southwest Forum in Denver, CO, in June; the Eastern Canada Forum in Thunder Bay, ON, in July; the Western Canada Forum in Kamloops, BC, in August (which was the 200th Regional Forum); the Pacific Regional Forum in Waikoloa, HI, in September; and the Southeast Regional Forum in Orlando, FL, in December.
- *National A.A. Archives Workshop*: G.S.O. Archivist Michelle Mirza (nonalcoholic) and General Manager Greg T. attended the 20th annual A.A. Archives Workshop held September 8-11 in Concord, CA. The theme of this year's workshop was "The Road of Happy Destiny." There were 476 registered attendees, including past delegates, past and current trustees, a former G.S.O. general manager, and archivists serving at the area, district or intergroup level.
- *Intergroup/Central Office, A.A.W.S., A.A. Grapevine*: The Annual Intergroup/Central Office seminar was held in Kansas City, MO, November 4-6, 2016. Members of the A.A.W.S. and A.A. Grapevine Boards attended, as well as management and staff from both offices, including the G.S.O. staff member serving as liaison to intergroup/central offices.
- *29th Russian A.A. General Service Conference*: In April 2016, Greg T. and David R., publishing director, attended the 29th A.A. General Service Conference of Russia and had the opportunity to discuss licensing and translation issues as well as to share experience with the Traditions, Concepts and A.A. principles.
- *38th National Convention*: Our staff member on the International assignment attended the 39th National Convention (General Service Conference) in Costa Rica.

*International* — Trustees, G.S.O. management and the international coordinator received invitations from A.A. in other countries to share information regarding licensing and translations and experience with A.A. groups and trusted servants in local service structures. Highlights include:

- The 24th World Service Meeting, held October 23-27, 2016 in Rye Brook, New York. Sixty delegates representing 41 countries or zones participated — including two countries who attended their first WSM: Paraguay and Slovakia. The theme was "One World, One A.A., One Language of the Heart." Several countries provided financial support for countries that needed assistance. Delegates from around the globe discussed a broad range of topics related to Recovery, Unity and Service. A.A.'s worldwide unity was strengthened through their sharing, and delegates journeyed home to pass along the experience, strength and hope they had gathered, to enrich A.A in their own countries and further extend the hand of our worldwide Fellowship. Greg T. served as chair throughout the week and Racy J., Clay R. and Steve S. were secretaries to the committees. Mary C. coordinated this event.

*Financial* — Complete audited financial details for 2016 are included in the Conference Manual and *Final Conference Report*. Here is an overview:

- Total contributions for the year ended December 31, 2016, were $7,934,869, which is $834,869 (11.76%) greater than budget and $780,724 (10.91%) greater than last year.
- Net sales for the year 2016 were $13,189,258.
- Gross margin from literature sales was $10,549,316.
- For the year 2016, net revenues were $16,880,440.
- For the year 2016, total operating expenses were $15,427,220.

*2017 Budget*: The A.A.W.S. Board approved the 2017 budget of the General Service Office with a net income of $397,793; after review by the trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee, the budget was approved by the General Service Board.

**Publishing**

*Sales*: For 2016, sales were below the estimate: $13,502,905 actual sales vs. estimate of $13,707,484, which is a $204,579 (.15%) negative variance.

Total e-book gross sales for January-December 2016 stand at $227,611.61 with 58,277 units distributed.

*International licensing and translation*: January-December 2016 saw a continuation of the surge in international requests, submissions and licensing. Translations shepherded through the review process reached an all-time record high of 62 reviews across 44 languages (up from 58 reviews across 28 languages in 2015).

Licenses to reproduce and distribute English and translated A.A.W.S., Inc. copyrighted literature rose from 10 countries granted new licenses in 2015 to 12 countries in 2016. Total licenses saw a dramatic uptick from 30 licenses in 2015 to 118 licenses in 2016, an increase of 293%.

Notable languages/countries include (among others): Bulgaria, India, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Russia, South Africa and Ukraine.

**G.S.O. and Staff Operations**

*Employees*: At the end of 2016, G.S.O. had 73 full-time, two part-time, and one temporary employee. It was the busiest year we have ever seen for recruiting, hiring 13 new employees which represents 20% of our total permanent positions. The main reason for this was our retirements. We had 14 employees resign or terminate in 2016, eight of whom were retirements, and four relocated or left for a new opportunity.

*New Employees (full names indicate nonalcoholics)*: Brittnae Brasfield, publishing assistant; Orjada Cinari, HR assistant; Jasmine De La Rosa, order entry clerk; Jacob Diaz, support services assistant; Danyelle Dover, contributions clerk; Alicia Green, records clerk; Amado Medina, digital typesetter artist; Raquel Mejia, order entry clerk; Kellie O'Doherty, receptionist; Jocelyn Pena, support services assistant; Ames S., managing editor; Tamica Taylor, accounts payable clerk; and Albin Z., director of administration and services. In addition, we also hired Eileen G. on a part-time basis as the international publishing consultant.

*Retirees*: Nadine Baker, staff assistant; Andrea Brennan, order entry manager; Sheila Coppin-Thom, staff assistant; Mary Clare L., staff member; Winsome Ricketts, contributions clerk; Lauren Robertson, accounts receivable clerk; Frank Smith, assistant supervisor — mail and shipping; and Eleanor W., managing editor. We also had the following four employees leave due to relocation and new opportunities: Arlene Diaz, support services assistant; Doris James, order entry clerk; Lenice Smith, order entry clerk; and Alicia Green, records clerk.

*G.S.O. Visitors*: In 2016, G.S.O. welcomed 2,520 visitors, many of whom travelled great distances to visit and express gratitude for their sobriety. G.S.O. hosted 24 large group visits.

*Archives*: Archives finished 2016 with approximately 1,450 requests for information and research, compared to 1,300 in 2015. In the coming months, we will begin to retrieve records temporarily stored off-site, acquired during the construction period, appraise these records and determine final disposition.

*Reprint Requests*: In 2016, A.A.W.S. granted permission/did not object to 70 requests to reprint from A.A. literature, and denied permission to 53 requests.

With the unanimous support of the A.A.W.S. Board, the general manager of G.S.O. has undertaken a complete review of day-to-day business practices, including our vendor selection and contracting policies and procedures. The purpose of this review is to make sure that current "best practices" are used in order to better serve the Fellowship. Past trustee-at-large/U.S. John Q. worked as an adviser to the general manager with this review, with the transition of the CFO's retirement and with the restructuring of the A.A.W.S. Finance Department.

**A.A.W.S. Updates**

*Greater Toronto Intergroup*: On October 28, 2016, A.A.W.S., Inc. passed a resolution to remove the Greater Toronto Area Intergroup from its database directory listings based on Toronto Intergroup's position that they were exempt from a discrimination claim on the basis that they are a religious organization. A.A.W.S. does not list intergroups or central offices that are affiliated with or claim to be religious organizations. In the past, intergroups have been removed from our database for this reason.

On March 10, 2017, the board passed a resolution that A.A.W.S., Inc. shall not remove any database directory listings of the Greater Toronto Area Intergroup, based on Toronto Intergroup's recent communication (letter dated March 5, 2017) of the group conscience that states they are not and have never been a religious organization.

Two points of note: (a) because we had not yet reprinted the intergroup/central office directory, the action voted by the board in October was not implemented, and (b) representatives of the Toronto Intergroup reached out to the board and the office to clarify its group conscience in this matter, which caused the board to take the action voted in March.

*Waiting Period for Listing New Groups*: Questions are frequently directed to A.A.W.S. and the General Service Office regarding the listing of contact information for new A.A. groups and the 30-day "waiting period" before a new group is entered into the office database and given an ID number.

The A.A.W.S. Board and General Service Office have distributed a memo to all Conference members describing the process for listing new groups. This communication is available to be shared with your areas.

The essence of the memo is that the 30-day period *is not* utilized to police any group or its practices, only to confirm that it says it is an A.A. group and that its contact information is correct.

As embodied in the Fourth Tradition, the formation and operation of an A.A. group resides within the group conscience of its members. While, hopefully, every A.A. group adheres closely to the guiding principles of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, A.A.W.S. neither monitors nor oversees the activities or practice of any A.A. group. Groups listed in the databases are listed at their own request. A directory listing does not constitute or imply approval or endorsement of any group's approach to or practice of the traditional A.A. program.

*William N., chairperson*

# Literature Distributed — 2016

## ENGLISH

### *Books*

| | |
|---|---|
| Alcoholics Anonymous | 399,874 |
| Alcoholics Anonymous (soft cover) | 298,526 |
| Alcoholics Anonymous (large print) | 36,809 |
| Alcoholics Anonymous (pocket abridged) | 104,007 |
| Alcoholics Anonymous (large print/abridged) | 14,986 |
| Daily Reflections | 116,007 |
| Daily Reflections (large print) | 12,259 |
| Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (reg. ed.) | 130,185 |
| Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (gift ed.) | 3,932 |
| Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (soft cover) | 122,998 |
| Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (large print) | 21,650 |
| Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (pocket ed.) | 29,280 |
| A.A. Comes of Age | 6,620 |
| As Bill Sees It | 19,306 |
| As Bill Sees It (soft cover) | 21,746 |
| As Bill Sees It (large print) | 6,166 |
| Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers | 6,824 |
| "Pass It On" | 5,534 |
| Experience, Strength & Hope | 7,980 |
| **Total** | **1,364,689** |

### *Booklets*

| | |
|---|---|
| The A.A. Service Manual/ Twelve Concepts for World Service | 21,043 |
| Living Sober | 93,729 |
| Living Sober (large print) | 8,132 |
| Came to Believe | 28,874 |
| Came to Believe (large print) | 2,691 |
| A.A. in Prison: Inmate to Inmate | 12,366 |
| **Total** | **166,835** |

### *Pamphlets*

| | |
|---|---|
| A.A. and the Armed Services | 7,917 |
| A.A. and the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic | 25,118 |
| A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional | 27,030 |
| A.A. for the Native North American | 13,763 |
| A.A. for the Woman | 58,978 |
| The A.A. Group | 76,654 |
| A.A. in Your Community | 28,964 |
| A.A. in Correctional Facilities | 13,167 |
| A.A. in Treatment Facilities | 15,679 |
| The A.A. Membership Survey | 24,610 |
| The A.A. Member — Medications and Other Drugs | 70,816 |
| A.A. Tradition — How It Developed | 16,916 |
| A.A.'s Legacy of Service | 10,883 |
| A Brief Guide to Alcoholics Anonymous | 104,842 |
| Circles of Love and Service | 35,568 |
| Bridging the Gap | 20,645 |
| Members of the Clergy Ask About A.A. | 13,891 |
| The Co-Founders of Alcoholics Anonymous | 11,170 |
| Do You Think You're Different? | 76,026 |
| Frequently Asked Questions | 143,652 |
| Frequently Asked Questions (large print) | 6,345 |
| G.S.R. | 36,405 |
| Grapevine — Our Meeting in Print | 13,792 |
| How A.A. Members Cooperate | 13,574 |
| How It Works | 51,218 |
| If You Are a Professional | 23,661 |
| Inside A.A. | 30,150 |
| A.A. for the Black and African American Alcoholic | 16,869 |
| Is A.A. for You? | 301,933 |
| Is A.A. for Me? | 87,727 |
| Is There an Alcoholic in the Workplace? | 10,607 |
| Is There an Alcoholic in Your Life? | 42,738 |
| It Happened to Alice | 17,289 |
| It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell | 27,950 |
| The Jack Alexander Article | 11,833 |
| Let's Be Friendly with Our Friends | 5,380 |
| A Member's-Eye View of A.A. | 28,083 |
| Memo to an Inmate Who May Be an Alcoholic | 25,317 |
| A Message to Correctional Facilities Administrators | 8,722 |
| A Newcomer Asks | 260,737 |
| Problems Other Than Alcohol | 81,871 |
| Questions and Answers on Sponsorship | 229,158 |
| Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings | 11,242 |
| The Twelve Concepts for World Service Illustrated | 28,511 |
| The Twelve Steps Illustrated | 43,046 |
| Twelve Tradition Flyer | 5,307 |
| The Twelve Traditions Illustrated | 50,808 |
| This Is A.A. | 195,768 |
| This Is A.A. (large print) | 4,209 |
| Three Talks to Medical Societies by Bill W. | 11,844 |
| A.A. for the Older Alcoholic (Large Print) | 34,927 |
| Too Young? | 40,223 |
| Understanding Anonymity | 44,394 |
| What Happened to Joe | 19,882 |
| Young People and A.A. | 69,245 |
| A.A. for the Alcoholic with Special Needs | 12,977 |
| Many Paths to Spirituality | 56,814 |
| **Total** | **2,756,845** |

### *Miscellaneous*

| | |
|---|---|
| Wallet cards — two-fold | 179,431 |
| Wallet cards — I Am Responsible | 29,693 |
| Wallet cards — Anonymity | 24,226 |
| Anonymity Display Card | 1,287 |
| Parchment — Scrolls | 1,551 |
| Placards | 557 |
| C.P.C. Workbook | 1,300 |
| Archives Workbook | 468 |
| Corrections Workbook | 809 |
| P.I. Workbook | 1,555 |
| Treatment Facilities Workbook | 968 |
| Treatment Facility Kit | 371 |
| Accessibilities Workbook | 353 |
| Twelve and Twelve on Computer Disk | 4 |
| A.A. Guidelines | 69,667 |
| Group Handbook | 1,992 |
| Wire Racks | 1,340 |
| Cassettes (tape cassettes) | 24 |
| Audio CDs | 517 |
| DVDs | 3,879 |
| Alcoholics Anonymous (cassette album) | 16 |
| Alcoholics Anonymous (4th Ed cassette album) | 6 |
| Alcoholics Anonymous (4th Ed cd album) | 1,892 |
| A.A. Comes of Age (cd album) | 218 |
| Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (cassette album) | 14 |
| Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (cd album) | 803 |
| TV Public Service Announcement | 168 |
| Radio Public Service Announcements | 72 |
| Twelve Steps Shade displays | 1,365 |
| Twelve Traditions Shade displays | 1,247 |
| Fact File | 1,472 |
| Table Top Display 12 & 12 | 380 |
| Pioneers of A.A. (cassette album) | 5 |
| Pioneers of A.A. (cd album) | 28 |
| Living Sober (cd album) | 230 |
| **Total** | **327,908** |
| **Grand Total** | **4,616,277** |

## SPANISH

### *Libros*

| | |
|---|---|
| Alcohólicos Anónimos (Alcoholics Anonymous soft cover) | 10,435 |
| Alcohólicos Anónimos (Alcoholics Anonymous hardcover) | 7,345 |
| Alcohólicos Anónimos (Alcoholics Anonymous abridged pocket size) | 6,108 |
| Alcohólicos Anónimos (Alcoholics Anonymous large print) | 3,520 |
| Alcohólicos Anónimos (Alcoholics Anonymous large print/abridged) | 1,062 |
| Como Lo Ve Bill (As Bill Sees It) | 3,493 |
| A.A. Llega a su Mayoría de Edad (A.A. Comes of Age) | 2,308 |
| El Dr. Bob y los Buenos Veteranos (Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers) | 1,920 |
| Transmitelo (Pass it On) | 2,164 |
| Reflexiones Diarias (Daily Reflections) | 7,384 |
| Viviendo Sobrio (Living Sober) | 9,987 |
| El Manual de Servicios de A.A./ Doce Conceptos para el Servicio Mundial (A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts) | 3,086 |
| Doce Pasos y Doce Tradiciones (Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions) | 13,807 |
| Llegamos a Creer (Came to Believe) | 4,589 |
| A.A. en Prisiones de Preso a Preso (Inmate to Inmate) | 4,166 |
| Doce Pasos y Doce Tradiciones (pocket ed.) | 2,572 |
| Doce Pasos y Doce Tradiciones (large print) | 4,336 |
| De las tinieblas hacia la luz | 3,247 |
| **Total** | **91,529** |

### *Folletos*

| | |
|---|---|
| A.A. en Su Comunidad (A.A. in Your Community) | 4,736 |
| 44 Preguntas (44 Questions) | 13,946 |
| Esto es A.A. (This is A.A.) | 12,260 |
| Es A.A. para Usted? (Is A.A. for You?) | 46,978 |
| Hay un Alcohólico en su Vida? (Is There an Alcoholic in Your Life?) | 4,373 |
| Carta a un Preso que Puede Ser Un Alcohólico (Memo to an Inmate) | 2,541 |
| El Punto de Vista de un Miembro de A.A. (A Member's-Eye View) | 1,771 |
| Alcohólicos Anónimos por Jack Alexander (Jack Alexander Article) | 1,150 |
| Seamos amistosos con nuestros amigos (Let's Be Friendly with Our Friends) | 1,212 |
| Tres Charlas a Sociedades Medicas por Bill W. (Three Talks to Medical Societies) | 2,154 |
| Un Principiante Pregunta (A Newcomer Asks) | 8,273 |
| Como Trabaja el Programa (How It Works) | 3,168 |
| Lo que le Sucedió a José (What Happened to Joe) | 3,409 |
| Comprendiendo el Anonimato (Understanding Anonymity) | 2,239 |
| El Grupo de A.A. (The A.A. Group) | 6,172 |
| Preguntas y Respuestas sobre el Apadrinamiento (Questions and Answers on Sponsorship) | 6,053 |
| El Miembro de A.A. — Los Medicamentos y Otras Drogas (The A.A. Member — Medications and Other Drugs) | 3,287 |
| Las Doce Tradiciones Ilustradas (The Twelve Traditions Illustrated) | 3,277 |
| A.A. en Centros de Tratamiento (A.A. in Treatment Centers) | 671 |
| Los Jóvenes y A.A. (Young People and A.A.) | 6,673 |
| La Tradición de A.A. — ¿Cómo se Desarrolló? (A.A. Tradition — How It Developed) | 1,257 |
| Una Breve Guía a A.A. (A Brief Guide to A.A.) | 9,033 |
| A.A. en las Instituciones Correccionales (A.A. in Correctional Facilities) | 917 |
| Problemas Diferentes del Alcohol (Problems Other Than Alcohol) | 4,007 |
| Es Mejor que Estar Sentado en una Celda (It Sure Beats Sitting In a Cell) | 4,179 |
| ¿Cómo Cooperan los Miembros de A.A.? (How A.A. Members Cooperate) | 677 |
| Dentro de A.A. (Inside A.A.) | 1,574 |
| A.A. como Recurso para los Profesionales de la Salud (A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional) | 706 |
| Un Ministro Religioso Pregunta Acerca de A.A. (The Clergy Asks) | 960 |
| R.S.G. (G.S.R.) | 3,096 |
| ¿Se Cree Usted Diferente? (Do You Think You're Different?) | 4,788 |
| Le Sucedió a Alicia (It Happened to Alice) | 2,539 |
| Hablando en Reuniones no-A.A. (Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings) | 934 |
| A.A. Para la Mujer (A.A. for the Woman) | 5,544 |
| Encuesta Sobre los Miembros de A.A. (A.A. Membership Survey) | 1,377 |
| ¿Hay un alcohólico en el lugar de trabajo? (Is There an Alcoholic in the Workplace?) | 2,033 |
| Es A.A. Para Mi? (Is A.A. for Me?) | 7,688 |
| A.A. para el alcohólico de edad avanzada (A.A. for the Older Alcoholic) | 3,668 |
| Los Doce Pasos Ilustrados (The Twelve Steps Illustrated) | 3,715 |
| Círculos de Amor y Servicio (Circles of Love & Service) | 2,082 |
| Uniendo las Orillas (Bridging the Gap) | 646 |
| Los Doce Conceptos Ilustrados (Twelve Concepts Illustrated) | 2,166 |
| A.A. para los alcohólicos gays/lesbianas (A.A. for the Gay and Lesbian Alcoholic) | 1,593 |
| El Legado de Servicio de A.A. (A.A.'s Legacy of Service) | 839 |
| Si Usted es un Profesional (If You Are a Professional) | 785 |
| El Grapevine y La Viña de A.A. (Grapevine — Our Meeting in Print) | 1,222 |
| ¿Demasiado Joven? (Too Young?) | 3,756 |
| Alcohólico Necesidades Especiales (A.A. for the Alcoholic with Special Needs) | 786 |
| Muchas sendas hacia espiritualidad (Many Paths to Spirituality) | 3,321 |
| **Total** | **210,231** |

### *Diverso*

| | |
|---|---|
| Guias (Guidelines) | 7,930 |
| Parchments, Spanish | 294 |
| Tarjetas Tamaño Billetera (wallet cards) | 10,700 |
| Alcohólicos Anónimos (cassette album) (Big Book on cassette) | 0 |
| Alcohólicos Anónimos (cd album) (Big Book on cd) | 474 |
| Doce Pasos y Doce Tradiciones (cd album) | 578 |
| **Total** | **19,976** |
| **Gran Total** | **321,736** |

## FRENCH

### *Livres*

| | |
|---|---|
| Les Alcooliques anonymes (Alcoholics Anonymous — format relie) | 3,090 |
| Les Alcooliques anonymes (Alcoholics Anonymous — format souple) | 789 |
| Les Alcooliques anonymes (Alcoholics Anonymous — format poche) | 541 |
| Les Alcooliques anonymes (Alcoholics Anonymous — large print) | 481 |
| Les Alcooliques anonymes (Alcoholics Anonymous — large print/abridged) | 102 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Les Douze Étapes et les Douze Traditions (Twelve & Twelve — format relie) | 1,277 |
| Les Douze Étapes et les Douze Traditions (Twelve & Twelve — format souple) | 566 |
| Les Douze Étapes et les Douze Traditions (Twelve & Twelve — large print) | 359 |
| Les Douze Étapes et les Douze Traditions (Twelve & Twelve — format poche) | 527 |
| Le Mouvement des A.A. devient Adulte (A.A. Comes of Age) | 181 |
| Réflexions de Bill (As Bill Sees It) | 1,555 |
| Réflexions Quotidiennes (Daily Reflections) | 2,717 |
| Dr Bob et les pionniers (Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers) | 224 |
| Expérience, Force & Espoir (Experience, Strength and Hope) | 122 |
| Transmets-Le (Pass It On) | 329 |
| Les A.A. en Prison (A.A. in Prison) | 559 |
| **Total** | **13,419** |

### *Plaquettes*

| | |
|---|---|
| Nous en sommes venus a croire (Came to Believe) | 908 |
| Vivre… sans alcool! (Living Sober) | 2,505 |
| Le Manuel du Service et les Douze Concepts (A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts) | 1,089 |
| **Total** | **4,502** |

### *Brochures*

| | |
|---|---|
| Voici les A.A. (This is A.A.) | 6,721 |
| Les A.A.: 44 Questions (44 Questions) | 2,338 |
| Les A.A.: sont-ils pour vous? (Is A.A. for You?) | 7,454 |
| Les A.A. pour la femme (A.A. for the Woman) | 1,402 |
| Collaboration des membres des A.A. (How A.A. Members Cooperate) | 197 |
| Y a-t-il un Alcoolique dans Votre Milieu de travail? (Is There an Alcoholic in the Workplace?) | 673 |
| Le membre des A.A. face aux medicaments et a la drogue (The A.A. Member — Medications & Other Drugs) | 1,066 |
| Les A.A. — Article du Saturday Evening Post (The Jack Alexander Article) | 543 |
| Collaborons avec nos amis (Let's Be Friendly with Our Friends) | 200 |
| Questions et reponses sur le parrainage (Questions and Answers on Sponsorship) | 2,330 |
| Les A.A.: Une ressource pour les medecins (A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional) | 917 |
| Les A.A. dans les centres de traitement (A.A. in Treatment Facilities) | 312 |
| La Tradition des A.A. et son developpement (A.A. Tradition — How It Developed) | 456 |
| Vous vous occupez prof. d'alcoolisme? (If You Are a Professional) | 347 |
| L'Histoire de Nicole (It Happened to Alice) | 619 |
| Jean face a son probleme d'alcool (What Happened to Joe) | 603 |
| Les A.A. dans votre milieu (A.A. in Your Community) | 903 |
| Problemes autres que l'alcoolisme (Problems Other Than Alcohol) | 1,466 |
| Point de vue d'un membre sur les A.A. (A Member's-Eye View of A.A.) | 256 |
| Les Douze Traditions illustrées (The Twelve Traditions Illustrated) | 1,587 |
| Les A.A. dans les etablissements correctionnels (A.A. in Correctional Facilities) | 244 |
| Ca vaut mieux que de languir en prison (It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell) | 999 |
| Petit guide pratique sur les A.A. (A Brief Guide to A.A.) | 1,871 |
| Les membres du clerge se renseignent (Members of the Clergy Ask About A.A.) | 227 |
| Les deux fondateurs d'A.A. (The Co-Founders of A.A.) | 195 |
| Message a l'intention d'un detenu (Memo to an Inmate) | 393 |
| Message aux Dir. d'Etabl. Correctionnels (Message to Correctional Facilities Administrators) | 339 |
| Le groupe des A.A. (The A.A. Group) | 1,523 |
| Les Douze Concepts illustrés (Twelve Concepts Illustrated) | 1,095 |
| Le sens de l'anonymat (Understanding Anonymity) | 1,571 |
| Trois causeries a des societes medicales (Three Talks to Medical Societies) | 515 |
| Y-a-t-il un alcoolique dans votre vie? (Is There an Alcoholic in Your Life?) | 894 |
| Le R.S.G. (G.S.R.) | 1,366 |
| Causeries a l'exterieur des A.A. (Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings) | 200 |
| Trop jeune? (Too Young?) | 1,254 |
| La Structure de l'Association des A.A. (Inside A.A.) | 1,028 |
| L'Heritage des Services des A.A. (A.A.'s Legacy of Service) | 417 |
| Cercles d'amour et de service (Circles of Love & Service) | 737 |
| Vous croyez-vous different? (Do You Think You're Different?) | 933 |
| Sondage sur les membres des A.A. (The A.A. Membership Survey) | 1,969 |
| Les jeunes et les A.A. (Young People & A.A.) | 1,313 |
| Votre B.S.G. (Your G.S.O.) | 872 |
| AA pour l'alcoolique plus âgé (A.A. for the older alcoholic) | 1,305 |
| Un nouveau veut savoir (A Newcomer Asks) | 3,658 |
| Les A.A. sont-ils pour moi? (Is A.A. for Me?) | 1,113 |
| Favoriser de rapprochement (Bridging the Gap) | 146 |
| Les Douze Etapes Illustrées (Twelve Steps Illustrated) | 663 |
| Les A.A. et les gais et lesbiennes alcooliques (A.A. for the Gay and Lesbian Alcoholic) | 284 |
| Les A.A. et les Autochtones d'Amerique du Nord (A.A. and the Native North American) | 502 |
| Pour L'alcoolique Besoins Spéciaux (A.A. for the Alcoholic with Special Needs) | 111 |
| Différentes avenues vers la spiritualité (Many Paths to Spirituality) | 8,931 |
| Lignes de conduite A.A. (Guidelines) | 970 |
| **Total** | **68,028** |

### *Divers*

| | |
|---|---|
| 12 & 12 (cassette album) | 1 |
| 12 & 12 (cd album) | 214 |
| Les Alcooliques anonymes (cd album) | 330 |
| Carte 12 Étapes/12 Traditions (Wallet card 12 Steps & 12 Traditions) | 1,432 |
| Carte anonymat (Français/anglais) (Anonymity wallet card) | 1,350 |
| Carte Je Suis Responsible (I am responsible wallet card) | 936 |
| Video Cassettes | 0 |
| DVDS | 7 |
| Notre Methode (How It Works) | 10,676 |
| Manuel de Groupe | 24 |
| Pochette de l'Information Publique | 10 |
| Pochette des Centres de Detention | 5 |
| Pochette de la CMP | 3 |
| Prière de la Sérénité (12x16) (Parchment Serenity Prayer) | 112 |
| Pochette des Centres de Traitement | 4 |
| Dossier d'Information sur les A.A. (Fact File) | 55 |
| **Total** | **15,159** |
| **Somme final** | **101,108** |

## A.A. Grapevine, Inc.

A.A. Grapevine, Inc. is one of two affiliate corporations of the General Service Board and the multimedia publisher of Grapevine magazine content, available on various platforms and in a variety of formats. A.A. Grapevine, Inc. also publishes Spanish-language content in La Viña magazine and its related books, CD and audio formats, as well as Spanish-language web pages on aagrapevine.org.

By charter, the A.A. Grapevine Board consists of seven to 10 directors. Since the 66th Conference, there have been eight directors: two general service trustees; two regional trustees; three nontrustee directors; and the executive editor/publisher.

The purpose of the Grapevine Corporate Board is to serve the A.A. Fellowship in the following ways:

- To oversee the publishing operations of A.A. Grapevine, Inc.
- To provide sound financial management of the corporation.
- To establish corporate policies and set corporate priorities.
- To engage in the ongoing process of strategic planning.
- To operate in accordance with the principles of A.A. as expressed in the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts.

The board strives to engage the Fellowship and to ensure members' awareness of the international journals of Alcoholics Anonymous, Grapevine and La Viña, as tools to help carry the message.

The A.A. Grapevine Board met in person seven times since the last Conference and once via an all-day teleconference. In 2016-2017, four standing committees were active: The Nominating and Governance Committees, chaired by Albin Z. and Carole B., facilitated all facets in the selection of candidates for board openings and selecting a general service trustee; the Finance and Budget Committee, chaired by Carole B., provided oversight for the budget process; and the Outreach Committee, chaired by Paz P., was made a standing committee. Grapevine's Editorial Advisory Board, consisting of members with particular expertise in media, met five times, always by teleconference in 2016-2017, while the La Viña Editorial Advisory Board met three times by teleconference during the same period.

Since the last Conference, A.A. Grapevine, Inc. has produced 12 issues of Grapevine, six issues of La Viña, an annual wall calendar and pocket planner, and three e-books. La Viña magazine continues to be published in 64 pages in response to the 2010 Conference Advisory Action to maintain spiritual parity with Grapevine magazine.

A.A. Grapevine, Inc. distributed 91,528 Grapevine and La Viña books, e-books, CDs, and other content related items, including the two latest book titles: *Un día a la vez*, published during La Viña's 20th anniversary, featuring a collection of stories that appeared in the magazine between 2007-2015 and reflecting the voices of the growing and vibrant Hispanic community in A.A.; and Grapevine's *Our Twelve Traditions*, featuring stories from A.A. members about their personal experiences with the core principles contained in A.A.'s Twelve Traditions.

*Circulation* — Grapevine's average monthly print circulation was 71,811 in fiscal year 2016 (this is more than budget by 1,442 and less than 2015 by 155). The Grapevine Online (GVO) averaged 5,030 subscribers in 2016. The average bimonthly circulation of La Viña was 10,374 (this is 357 greater than budget and 19 over 2015 levels).

*Operations* — During 2016, A.A. Grapevine continued operational cost-control measures resulting in expenses coming in under budget.

*Financial* — Complete and audited financial details for 2016 are included in the Conference Manual and *Final Conference Report*. Here is an overview:

- Grapevine ended 2016 with net income of $164,540 against budgeted net loss of $146,063.
- Gross profit for the magazine and subscription products reached $1,449,246. Gross profit on the magazine was ahead of budget by $86,718.
- Gross profit on books and related items was $455,898.

- Overhead costs were budgeted at $1,867,945 versus an actual cost of $1,755,704. This was a savings of $112,241. This savings occurred mainly in Website Expenses and General and Administrative Expenses.

*La Viña* — La Viña is published by A.A. Grapevine, Inc., with the shortfall between revenue and expenses made up by the General Service Board as a service to the Fellowship. La Viña had an average circulation of 10,374 per issue. Gross profit on the magazine was $52,741. This is below budget by $8,808. Gross profit on related items was ahead of budget by $5,594, and overhead was under budget by $2,783. The net difference between revenue and expenses for 2016 was $152,082 or $431 more than was budgeted.

*A.A. Grapevine and the Reserve Fund* — A.A. Grapevine maintains a balance in the Reserve Fund to fund its unfulfilled subscription liability. The balance at December 31, 2016, was $1,943,500 while the actual subscription liability as of that date was $1,830,697, meaning that the liability is overfunded by $112,803. In March 2016, A.A. Grapevine, Inc. made a transfer of $260,000 into the Reserve Fund. Since 2014 A.A. Grapevine, Inc. has consistently made transfers of excess working capital to the Reserve Fund. The A.A. Grapevine Board continues to be deeply grateful to the Fellowship and staff for these tremendous achievements.

*Website* — The website is regularly updated to better serve the Fellowship and to engage a wider and more diverse audience; it is central to Grapevine's current and future plans. Month end December 2016 reports indicate that an average of 41,917 unique visitors go to an average of 3.17 pages on aagrapevine.org each month. The Grow Your Grapevine (GYG) outreach effort encouraged the Fellowship to learn more about Grapevine and to inform Grapevine about members' favorite activities related to the magazine from March 2016 – February 2017. The area with the greatest number of submissions to GYG will be featured in a special section in Grapevine magazine during 2017.

A web page dedicated to La Viña's 20th anniversary was also developed and resulted in 800 subscriptions.

The audio page on aagrapevine.org showcases the Audio Project, featuring instructions for recording up to seven-minute-long stories submitted by members, with two member's audio stories offered online as samples. More than 400 audio stories have been received for Grapevine and are being archived, with 70-plus more for La Viña.

Grapevine continues to produce a complimentary Grapevine Daily Quote online, featuring excerpts drawn from the archives of classic Grapevine literature. Selections are posted daily on aagrapevine.org and may be requested on an opt-in basis for daily email delivery. Subscriptions number 41,767 as of February 2017.

Grapevine and La Viña subscribers are committed to the print magazine as an invaluable Twelfth Step tool as well as for their own personal recovery. At the same time, Grapevine's online offerings continue to attract new subscribers with few conversions from print. The Grapevine website has become the organization's principal connection with the majority of subscribers. Approximately 29% of Grapevine's online subscribers opt for both print and online magazines. The Grapevine Online subscription provides unlimited access to previously unpublished stories, Audio Grapevine, the Story Archive and the current online issues of both Grapevine and La Viña.

At current prices, Grapevine's basic online subscription costs subscribers about ten cents a day, and the print subscription is eight cents per day. The efforts of the Grapevine Board and management team continue to broaden awareness of the magazines, books, audio offerings and website to carry the message through an expanded subscriber base. The new Grapevine subscription app, the GYG outreach effort and limited Fellowship New Vision (FNV) list-sharing efforts with A.A.W.S. have contributed to the growth of subscriptions. The Grapevine Board is seeking to expand these efforts, including seeking new connections through opt-in features to hear from Grapevine or La Viña with local, state and regional roundup, convention or conference registrations. Organization-wide support is essential to the continued health of A.A. Grapevine, Inc. and has been the subject of many discussions with both the General Service Board and A.A.W.S., Inc.

The A.A. Grapevine Board and management team are committed to self-support and A.A. Grapevine, Inc.'s continued financial vitality, with member support, while growing and evolving. The board's focus on financial health as demonstrated throughout 2016 will continue in 2017. It is understood that cost reduction represents only one piece of the break-even formula, while new approaches to additional revenue are equally important.

During 2017, the Grapevine Board will introduce or continue:

- The "4 Seasons of Service with Grapevine & La Viña" outreach effort in March 2017.
- Working with A.A.W.S. to identify efficiencies.
- Updating the website and store.
- Exploring incorporation of the audio magazine into the Grapevine subscription app.
- Working to establish opt-in selections on local roundup, convention and conference registration forms for those who wish to receive GV/LV email messages.
- Providing a rewarding and supportive work environment for staff, including training and development in line with stated objectives.

As a mirror of the membership, Grapevine both reflects and belongs to the Fellowship. For more than seven decades, Grapevine has conveyed the "Voices of A.A." as a tool for many in recovery, evolving over time and reliably carrying the message to anyone who reaches out for the hand of A.A.

Should the Fellowship desire that Grapevine and La Viña continue into the future — for alcoholics and friends, many of whom may not know about A.A. yet — additional subscribers will be required. Fellowship-wide support for A.A. Grapevine, Inc. is integral to this effort, to our history and to our future.

*Joel C., chairperson*

## AA Grapevine Literature Distributed — 2016

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ***Books*** | | |
| Best of Bill — (Hard Cover — Discontinued) | | 26 |
| Best of Bill (Soft Cover) | | 5,176 |
| Best of Bill (Large Print) | | 1,102 |
| Best of the Grapevine I (Soft Cover) | | 26 |
| The Language of the Heart (Hard Cover) | | 2,526 |
| El Lenguaje del Corazón | | 2,213 |
| A.A. Around the World (Soft Cover) | | 31 |
| The Language of the Heart (Soft Cover) | | 2,659 |
| Thank You For Sharing (Soft Cover) | | 438 |
| Spiritual Awakening (Soft Cover) | | 2,193 |
| The Home Group Revised (Soft Cover) | | 22 |
| I Am Responsible: The Hand of AA (Soft Cover) | | 817 |
| Emotional Sobriety (Soft Cover) | | 4,913 |
| The Language of the Heart (Large Print) | | 676 |
| In Our Own Words | | 711 |
| Beginners Book | | 2,853 |
| Voices of Long-Term Sobriety | | 1,028 |
| A Rabbit Walks Into a Bar | | 1,874 |
| Spiritual Awakenings Vol II | | 1,064 |
| Step By Step (Soft Cover) | | 1,532 |
| Emotional Sobriety II (Soft Cover) | | 2,929 |
| Young & Sober | | 1,303 |
| Into Action | | 1,151 |
| Happy, Joyous & Free | | 1,670 |
| Happy, Joyous & Free — Fr & Sp | | 3,778 |
| One on One | | 2,216 |
| No Matter What | | 2,269 |
| Grapevine Daily Quote Book | | 3,361 |
| Sober & Out | | 1,403 |
| Forming True Partnerships | | 3,865 |
| Best of Bill — French (Soft Cover) | | 1,474 |
| The Home Group — French (Soft Cover) | | 403 |
| Le Langage Du Coeur | | 493 |
| En Tête à Tête | | 953 |
| Best Of Bill — Spanish (Soft Cover) | | 2,198 |
| Lo Mejor de la Viña | | 803 |
| El Grupo Base | | 1,055 |
| Un Día A La Vez | | 2,375 |
| Our Twelve Traditions | | 5,491 |
| | **Total:** | **71,070** |
| ***E-books*** | | |
| The Language of the Heart | | 965 |
| Best of Bill | | 507 |
| Lo Mejor de Bill | | 45 |
| Step by Step | | 45 |
| Emotional Sobriety I | | 687 |
| Emotional Sobriety II | | 190 |
| Spiritual Awakenings I | | 105 |
| Spiritual Awakenings II | | 25 |
| Young & Sober | | 5 |
| Into Action | | 49 |
| Happy, Joyous & Free | | 83 |
| Forming True Partnerships | | 214 |
| Un Día a la Vez (One Day at a Time) | | 6 |
| Our Twelve Traditions | | 122 |
| Other | | 471 |
| | **Total:** | **3,519** |
| ***CDs – English*** | | **1,444** |
| ***CDs – Spanish*** | | **1,550** |
| | **Total:** | **2,994** |
| ***Miscellaneous*** | | **13,945** |
| | **Grand Total** | **91,528** |

### GRAPEVINE SUBSCRIPTIONS* — Geographical Breakdown

| | APRIL 2017 | APRIL 2016 | INCREASE/ DECREASE |
|---|---|---|---|
| **UNITED STATES*** | | | |
| Alabama | 427 | 507 | (80) |
| Alaska | 337 | 377 | (40) |
| Arizona | 1,469 | 1,508 | (39) |
| Arkansas | 342 | 326 | 16 |
| California | 6,103 | 6,595 | (492) |
| Colorado | 1,151 | 1,244 | (93) |
| Connecticut | 966 | 1,083 | (117) |
| Delaware | 210 | 273 | (63) |
| District of Columbia | 96 | 109 | (13) |
| Florida | 3,855 | 3,999 | (144) |
| Georgia | 1,592 | 1,675 | (83) |
| Hawaii | 391 | 413 | (22) |
| Idaho | 481 | 492 | (11) |
| Illinois | 1,985 | 2,106 | (121) |
| Indiana | 1,020 | 1,052 | (32) |
| Iowa | 622 | 639 | (17) |
| Kansas | 579 | 660 | (81) |
| Kentucky | 539 | 550 | (11) |
| Louisiana | 482 | 487 | (5) |
| Maine | 393 | 411 | (18) |
| Maryland | 824 | 836 | (12) |
| Massachusetts | 1,484 | 1,584 | (100) |
| Michigan | 2,032 | 2,198 | (166) |
| Minnesota | 1,748 | 1,804 | (56) |
| Mississippi | 237 | 255 | (18) |
| Missouri | 1,127 | 1,475 | (348) |
| Montana | 456 | 463 | (7) |
| Nebraska | 545 | 576 | (31) |
| Nevada | 688 | 722 | (34) |
| New Hampshire | 442 | 476 | (34) |
| New Jersey | 1,904 | 1,945 | (41) |
| New Mexico | 436 | 461 | (25) |
| New York | 3,807 | 3,930 | (123) |
| North Carolina | 1,612 | 1,735 | (123) |
| North Dakota | 260 | 283 | (23) |
| Ohio | 1,568 | 1,659 | (91) |
| Oklahoma | 460 | 481 | (21) |
| Oregon | 1,131 | 1,180 | (49) |
| Pennsylvania | 3,537 | 3,763 | (226) |
| Rhode Island | 258 | 311 | (53) |
| South Carolina | 622 | 611 | 11 |
| South Dakota | 214 | 238 | (24) |
| Tennessee | 688 | 704 | (16) |
| Texas | 2,370 | 2,623 | (253) |
| Utah | 419 | 432 | (13) |
| Vermont | 241 | 268 | (27) |
| Virginia | 1,606 | 1,650 | (44) |
| Washington | 1,914 | 1,953 | (39) |
| West Virginia | 263 | 262 | 1 |
| Wisconsin | 1,764 | 1,744 | 20 |
| Wyoming | 175 | 197 | (22) |
| Puerto Rico | 18 | 15 | 3 |
| U.S. Possessions/APO | 40 | 41 | (1) |
| Virgin Islands | 23 | 32 | (9) |
| **Subtotal US** | **57,953** | **61,413** | **(3,460)** |
| **CANADA** | | | |
| Alberta/NWT | 639 | 633 | 6 |
| British Columbia/YKN | 838 | 845 | (7) |
| Manitoba | 261 | 296 | (35) |
| New Brunswick/PEI | 215 | 223 | (8) |
| Nova Scotia/ Newfoundland/Labrador | 271 | 257 | 14 |
| Ontario | 2,398 | 2,545 | (147) |
| Quebec | 218 | 242 | (24) |
| Saskatchewan | 278 | 295 | (17) |
| **Subtotal CANADA** | **5,118** | **5,336** | **(218)** |
| **FOREIGN*** | 608 | 643 | (35) |
| **Grand Total** | **63,679** | **67,392** | **(3,713)** |

**LA VIÑA SUBSCRIPTIONS***

| Mar./Apr. '17 | Mar./Apr. '16 | Diff. |
|---|---|---|
| 7,508 | 7,955 | (447) |

(*does not include monthly orders)

# Finance Report

*The Finance report, which is summarized and condensed here, was given on Monday evening by David Morris, nonalcoholic Class A treasurer of the General Service Board and chairperson of the trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee, covering the finances of the General Service Board, A.A.W.S., the Grapevine and La Viña. The full report, accompanying slides and detailed notes are not included in this publication, but are available upon request. For more details on A.A. finances and the audited consolidated financial statements upon which the financial report is based, please see the financial section of this Report, which begins on page 84, as well as the report from the trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee. A question and answer session for all Conference members followed this Finance report.*

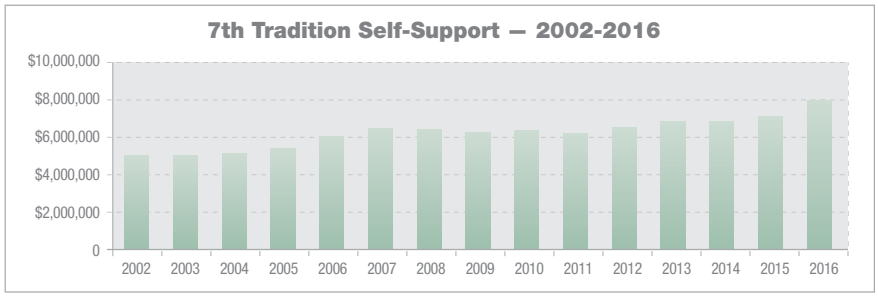
Good evening. My name is David Morris and I am a Class A trustee and treasurer of the General Service Board. It is again my privilege to deliver this year's Treasurer's report to the 67th General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous.

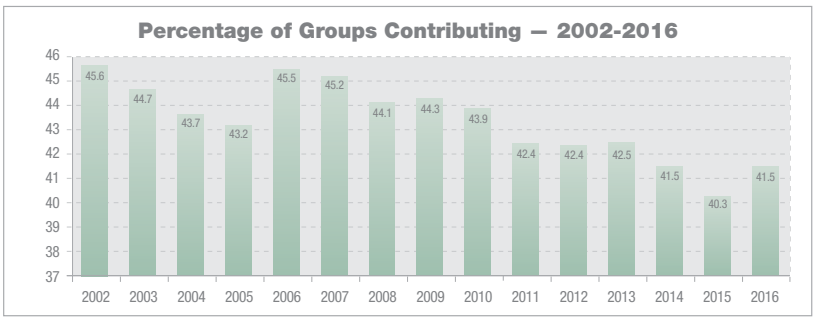
Through this report, often referred to as "Finance Around the Picnic Table," a phrase coined at the 59th Conference, our goal is to help you become familiar with A.A.'s financial position so that you can communicate clearly to your areas. Enhancing our collective understanding of our finances is one way to improve the service structure.

The accompanying charts provide a look at some highlights of the Fellowship's finances for 2016.

**Self-support:** In terms of self-support, a 15-year history shows generally increasing Seventh Tradition contributions from 2002 through 2016, with the current year reaching a record level of more than $7.9 million. This record level of support came from more than 27,500 groups (a dollar increase of 8.1% from the previous year) amounting to approximately $6,500,000; individual contributions amounting to approximately $609,000 (an increase of 29% from the previous year); and additional contributions from conferences, areas, intergroups, etc., amounting to approximately $668,000. The 2016 total of all contributions was $7,934,869, up 10.9% from 2015.

**Services:** When it comes to services provided to the Fellowship and their related costs, $9,906,588 was expended in 2016 (an increase of 2.9% from 2015), covering the following service activities at G.S.O.: group services, public information, cooperation with the professional community, treatment facilities, corrections, overseas services (literature assistance) and loners, archives, General Service Conference, Regional Forums, World Service Meeting, International Convention, trustees' and directors' activities, and supporting services, which include the direct costs of administration, finance, human resources, information technology, rent, and all other indirect overhead. When these 2016 costs of $9,906,588 are matched up with the 2016 Seventh Tradition contributions of $7,934,869, there is a resulting shortfall of $1,971,719. This shortfall is covered by an excess of publishing profits.



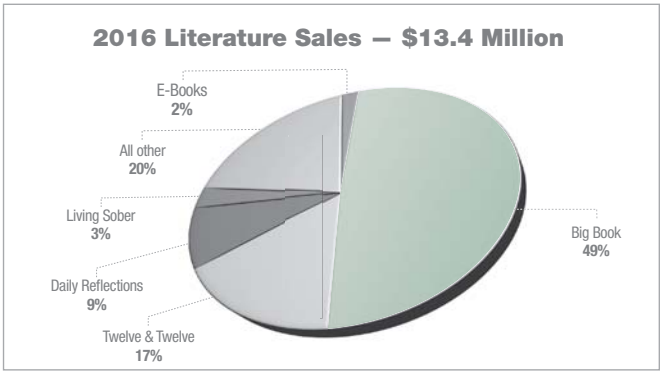



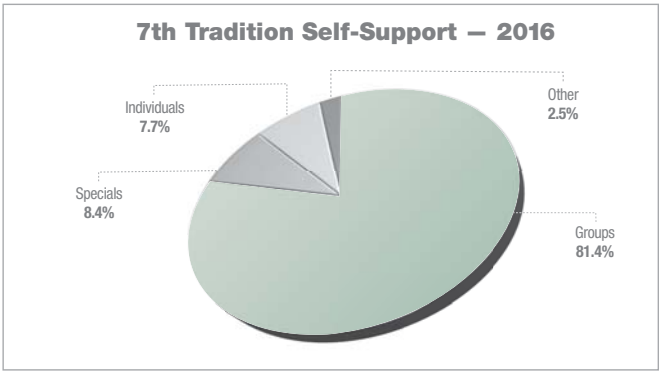

## What Goes on at G.S.O.?

A few examples of what the 90 people of both G.S.O. and Grapevine do each working day to make sure that the hand of A.A. is always there for the Fellowship and the still-suffering alcoholic:

- 13,600 booklets, pamphlets, and miscellaneous items shipped daily
- 4,900 Big Books and other A.A. books shipped daily
- 390 people (216 first timers) on average attended each of 14 Regional Forums held during last three years
- 230 emails responded to daily
- 65 phone calls answered daily
- 300 Seventh Tradition contributions processed daily, with thank-you letters sent
- 200 copies of Grapevine and La Viña mailed daily
- 6 requests for information from the Archives answered daily (Archives manages over 2,700 cubic feet of our history — materials are equivalent to nearly **three quarters of a mile** of 8½" x 11" pages of paper stacked end to end).

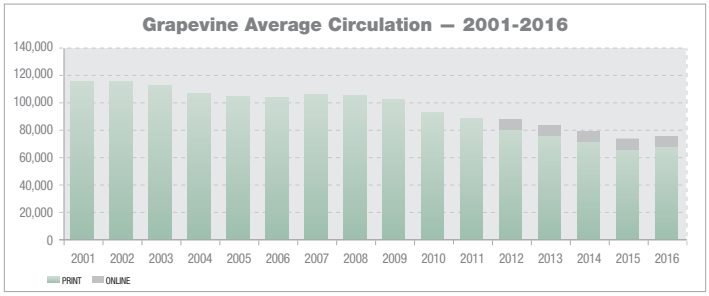
**Publishing:** A.A.W.S. publishing activities for 2016 show gross sales of $13,413,929, up 5.4%, from 2015. This increase in gross publishing revenue resulted in 2016 net profit increasing to $3,424,887, up 27.7%, from 2015. The difference or shortfall between Seventh Tradition contributions and the cost of services provided to the




Fellowship is covered through these A.A.W.S. publishing profits, resulting in a net profit of $1,453,218.

**Grapevine/La Viña:** For 2016, the total of all types of Grapevine subscriptions increased over 2015 (77,429 in 2016 versus 77,199 in 2015). Further, print subscriptions in 2016 of 71,811 were essentially level with 2015 of 71,966. These positive results reflect the various initiatives undertaken by Grapevine over the past few years. For La Viña, a shortfall of $152,082 for 2016 between revenues earned and the related costs continues to be covered through a transfer from the General Service Board's General Fund, as this shortfall is considered a service to the Fellowship.




**Pension and Retiree Medical Plans:** In 1965, A.A. established a traditional Defined Benefit Pension Program for its employees. This plan will continue to exist until the last eligible employee who is covered retires and then eventually passes away in 40 to 50 years. However, to cap this exposure, A.A. transitioned from a Defined Benefit Plan to a Defined Contribution Plan for all new A.A.W.S. and Grapevine employees hired subsequent to January 1, 2013. Over the very long term, this change will cap the pension plan obligations and reduce ongoing costs. Defined benefit pension costs are funded out of A.A.W.S. and Grapevine current operations and now account for about 9% of operating expenses, down from 12% in 2013.

**G.S.O./Grapevine Contributions to the Reserve Fund:** To pay its bills and fund its obligations, A.A.W.S. has only two sources of money: contributions and literature sales. At the end of each year, any cash beyond that needed to pay bills on time is transferred to the Reserve Fund. For 2016, A.A.W.S. contributed $1,200,000 to the Reserve Fund. Grapevine (which has only one source of money: subscriptions/literature sales) contributed $40,000 in 2016 and $240,000 in 2015. By Conference action, the "Prudent Operating Reserve" is defined as an amount equal to the preceding year's combined operating expenses of A.A. World Services, A.A. Grapevine and the General Fund of the General Service Board. At December 31, 2016, the Reserve Fund stood at $14,959,000, representing 10.3 months of combined operating expenses.

## 2016 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

| Amount in $ | 2016 ACTUAL | 2016 BUDGET | COMPARED TO 2016 BUDGET | 2015 ACTUAL | COMPARED TO 2015 ACTUAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **General Service Office** | | | | | |
| Seventh Tradition Contributions | 7.9 M | 7.1 M | 835 K (12%) better | 7.1 M | 781 K (11%) increase |
| Cost of Services Provided to Fellowship | 9.9 M | 10.3 M | 369 K (4%) better | 9.6 M | 274 K (3%) increase |
| Shortfall between Seventh Tradition & Cost of Services | 2.0 M | 3.2 M | 1.2 M (38%) better | 2.5 M | 507 K (21%) decrease |
| Literature Profits | 3.4 M | 3.2 M | 275 K (9%) better | 2.7 M | 744 K (28%) increase |
| Net income | 1.5 M | 0.03 M | 1.5 M better | 0.2 M | 1.3 M increase |
| **Grapevine & La Viña** | | | | | |
| Average Circulation | 77,429 | 75,610 | 1,819 better | 77,199 | 230 increase |
| Net Income (loss) | 165 K | (146 K) | 311 K better | 241 K | 76K (32%) decrease |
| General Fund cost of La Viña service | 152 K | 152 K | Equal to budget | 146 K | 6 K increase |
| **Reserve Fund** | | | | | |
| Coverage Ratio | 10.3 months | 9.6 months | Increase of 0.7 months | 10.2 months | Increase of 0.1 months |

M – millions; K – thousands

# Trustees' Committees and Staff Reports

## ARCHIVES

**Trustees' Report:** The trustees' Archives Committee was established by the General Service Board and held its first meeting in October 1973. This committee is responsible for developing and implementing the policies that govern the Archives services. The committee makes recommendations to the General Service Board on Archives procedures and budget. Through its group conscience, and guided by A.A.'s principles and professional standards, the committee undertakes and upholds its responsibility and authority for the maintenance and use of the Archives.

The committee supports the G.S.O. Archives' commitment to permit access to members of Alcoholics Anonymous and others for research purposes. The committee, since the 2016 General Service Conference, granted permission to fifteen researchers for use of archival material. The permission also included access to archival audio recordings, for limited use. Each request is carefully considered through recommendations from the archivist and established Archives policies. The permission to conduct research is granted conditional on a signed agreement to strictly maintain the anonymity of all members, alive and deceased, including A.A.'s co-founders.

At the committee's meeting in August, an annual review of the History and Actions was undertaken, noting significant actions and Archives policies. The report and Committee Considerations of the 2016 Conference Archives Committee were also reviewed.

A subcommittee was formed to review the Archives Sound and Moving Image Access Policy and Procedures and a revised policy that included changes prompted by an attorney's legal review was approved at the committee's October meeting.

Another subcommittee was appointed to explore the feasibility of an A.A. Flickr page for G.S.O. Archives. Based on counsel's recommendation, Flickr's Terms and Conditions and the unknown copyright status of images in the Archives, it was agreed that the creation of an A.A. Flickr page for G.S.O. Archives would not be pursued at this time.

A request to add text in the Archives Workbook acknowledging intergroup archivists and their functions was considered. Following discussion, the committee agreed to add text on intergroup archivists in the introduction section of the Archives Workbook. This will be added in a future printing.

A proposal for a new publication on Bill W.'s General Service Conference talks from 1951–1970 was also discussed. The committee agreed to forward to the 2017 Conference Committee on Archives the proposal for a new book, *Unity in Action: Bill W.'s General Service Conference Talks, 1951–1970* (working title) for consideration of the concept.

Additionally, the committee had a wide-ranging discussion on ways that G.S.O. Archives can provide support and assistance, through multimedia, to local Area Archives engaged in archival service. The committee looks forward to continuing this discussion at a future meeting.

Throughout the year, the committee was kept apprised of projects executed by the Archives staff, projected goals for the upcoming year, as well as tabulated research inquiries handled by the staff.

*Peter Luongo (nonalcoholic Class A trustee), chairperson*

**Staff Report:** The Archives staff provides resource material and service to A.A. members, researchers and others about A.A. history; responds to worldwide information requests; and offers professional support to local areas, districts or groups interested in researching their history. In 2016, we responded to more than 1,400 requests for information, utilizing a combination of unpublished primary sources and published material maintained in the repository. We welcomed new local archivists and committee chairs serving either in the area or district position and furnished each individual with an Archives Workbook, Guidelines and other resources.

Summer 2016 marked the final issue of our electronic newsletter, *Markings*. After some consideration, this was decided in order to allocate resources in the Archives Department better and more cost-effectively. In the future, *Box 4-5-9*, the G.S.O. bulletin, will occasionally publish articles related to A.A. archives and history with information provided by G.S.O. Archives.

We have been reporting on our ongoing multiyear project that involves the development of the Archives audio catalog. This project, which commenced in 2012, requires listening to many thousands of recordings of A.A.'s

co-founders, oldtimers, early friends of A.A., the General Service Conference and others. The project was completed in August 2016.

Another ongoing project instituted in 2013 entailed digitizing early group correspondence from the United States, Canada and around the world from the 1940s through the 1950s. The scanning assistant has digitized thousands of letters and has completed the collection from the United States. We are currently working on the Canadian collection, followed by International. The original letters are being preserved for permanent storage in the Archives' secured offsite facility, while reference copies are maintained onsite. We anticipate a completion date of December 2017 for this project.

The digital archivist conducted an inventory of our electronic collection of all A.A. Conference-approved literature and updated these in our database. We now maintain digital as well as analog copies of A.A. literature. She also digitized the *Final Conference Report* from 1951 through 2004 and worked on digitizing older issues of our formerly published newsletter, *Markings*. The latter are to be added to the archived collection on the G.S.O. A.A. website.

In March 2016, an organization-wide records management initiative was coordinated in a joint effort by the Archives and Information Technology (IT) Departments. We procured the services of a certified records manager to compose a records retention manual for the G.S.O. The goal is to create retention schedules that specify how long G.S.O. records should be kept to satisfy the organization's legal, operational and historical records.

A subset of the records management project includes the creation of written guidelines for preservation and purging paper files categorized as "Staff Subject Files." The guidelines were also composed by the records manager. A temporary employee was hired to undertake the task of purging the records, which is the first phase of this project. Documents identified as having continuing reference and historical value will then be digitized.

Archives staff continues to develop the "Archives and History" portal of the G.S.O. website. We added a clip of Bill W. speaking at the 1969 General Service Conference. In this clip, Bill shares his experience of a failed attempt to change "spiritual awakening" to "spiritual experience" in A.A.'s Twelve Steps. On the Digital Exhibit page, a new exhibit on the Twelve Traditions was added, and the A.A. Timeline was updated with new information for 2015 through 2016.

Archives staff worked on curating a series of new exhibitions in the Archives exhibit room. This year we highlighted the World Service Meeting, the General Service Conference, A.A. Around the World, Young People in A.A. and other interesting exhibits.

None of this work would be possible without the help of a very capable team of archivists, working to ensure that we fulfill the mission and goals of the G.S.O. Archives.

Finally, the Archives staff extends gratitude to those members and others who have generously donated material to the Archives within the past 12 months.

*Michelle Mirza, archivist*

## AUDIT COMMITTEE

**Trustees' Report:** The trustees' Audit Committee, formed by the General Service Board in 2003, is composed of a minimum of three and a maximum of five trustees who are appointed by the chairman of the General Service Board.

The committee was originally created as a proactive measure to assist the General Service Board in fulfilling its fiduciary obligation of Prudent Corporate Governance. As a result of the recent passage of the New York State Nonprofit Law, the committee now has specific responsibilities that are set forth under the law, some of which are set forth in the last paragraph of this report.

The committee meets at least twice a year with the outside auditor and G.S.O. and Grapevine management; separately with the auditor; and in executive session without the auditor.

The Audit Committee reports to the General Service Board and reviews such items as audit process, audit results, internal controls, best accounting practices and management integrity. The Audit Committee also recommends appointment of the auditor to the board.

*David Morris, chairperson*

## COMMUNICATION SERVICES

**Staff Report:** G.S.O. offers an A.A. website at aa.org to serve the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous as a resource for A.A. members, those seeking help from A.A., professionals working with alcoholics, the media and the public at large. G.S.O.'s website provides accurate and consistent information about A.A., provides details about services coordinated by G.S.O. and encourages participation of A.A. members, groups and committees in A.A. services and activities.

The Communication Services staff member serves as the liaison for information about G.S.O.'s A.A. website, collecting feedback on design and content from visitors to the website; chairing the G.S.O. Website Committee; and collaborating with G.S.O.'s digital media manager to continually update and improve aa.org. Collected experience regarding local website committees is shared from this desk upon request.

This staff member serves as secretary to the A.A.W.S. Technology/Communication/ Services Committee and prepares website activity reports for the A.A.W.S. Board and the Conference Committee on Public Information.

In November, the past Communication Services staff member, Rick Walker, attended the third annual National A.A. Technology Workshop (N.A.A.T.W.), first held in August 2014 to provide a forum for A.A. service workers to gather, share and seek solutions to technology-related issues faced by local A.A. members, groups and service entities.

Following Rick W.'s attendance at the N.A.A.T.W., he rotated out as communication services coordinator and Clement C. rotated in as the new coordinator, effective Monday, December 5, 2016.

*Clement C.*

## COMPENSATION COMMITTEE

**Trustees' Report:** The trustees' Compensation Committee, formed in 2006 by the General Service Board, consists of at least four trustees. The committee was created as a proactive measure to assist the General Service Board in fulfilling its fiduciary obligation of Prudent Corporate Governance.

The Compensation Committee reports to the General Service Board and reviews and advises A.A. World Services, Inc. (A.A.W.S.) and A.A. Grapevine, Inc. (AAGV) on such items as overall compensation philosophies and policies, best compensation practices, and compliance with the IRS for executive compensation for nonprofit organizations.

The committee worked with A.A.W.S. and AAGV to obtain the services of Astron Solutions to conduct an analysis of salary structure and overall compensation for all full-time positions in A.A. World Services and A.A. Grapevine. The committee also requested the analysis of the total compensation for the highest paid executives in each corporation. The committee received the reports and met with Astron Solutions to discuss the results of the analysis. The reports indicated that the total compensation packages of the highest paid executives are within reasonable levels and do not represent excessive compensation.

*William N., chairperson*

## CONFERENCE

**Trustees' Report:** The committee as a whole met three times since the 2016 General Service Conference. In addition, six subcommittees were established and most were active between meetings.

Since the 66th General Service Conference, the committee reviewed the Report of the 2016 Conference Agenda Committee and the Advisory Actions pertaining to the Conference, including the theme chosen for the 67th General Service Conference, "Supporting Our Future."

The committee discussed the summary of the evaluations from members of the 66th General Service Conference and the notes of the G.S.O. post-Conference sharing session and noted how both would help the committee identify issues to be addressed in planning future Conferences.

The committee took no action on a proposal that tablets be distributed to Conference members at the 67th General Service Conference instead of the traditional Conference manuals.

The committee agreed to forward to the Conference Policy and Admissions Committee a request that an anonymity-protected, digital *Final Conference Report* be published, starting with the 67th General Service Conference.

The committee approved and forwarded to the Conference Report and Charter Committee a report describing principles, considerations and procedures for utilizing electronic voting at the 2018 General Service Conference. The report includes a recommendation that the Conference move ahead with electronic voting for all Conference voting with the exception of elections for regional trustees and trustees-at-large, which are conducted by ballot.

The committee approved a revised version of "How the General Service Conference Operates," with updated language regarding floor actions and the addition of clarifying language on the option of making a "motion to recommit." The committee noted that the motion to recommit would send an item to the appropriate trustees' committee.

The committee approved a revised "Information and Suggestions for Conference Committee Chairpersons" with the inclusion of the statement that committees schedule a conference call meeting prior to Conference so that your committee can handle "housekeeping" items such as voting, breaks, order of agenda items, etc.

The committee considered the distribution of the work among Conference committees, and recommended to the General Service Board that "In order to assist the Conference committees in handling their workload, if a Conference committee feels it is helpful to complete the work of their committee, they are welcome to meet via conference call in the 60 days prior to the Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference. They may use the call for such things as deciding how to conduct their business including the means of voting within the committee, reordering the items on their agenda if needed, and holding preliminary non-voting discussions on what they consider to be priority items. Conference committee secretaries would be available to facilitate these meetings." Upon approval of the recommendation, the committee forwarded to each Conference committee an agenda item regarding changing their Composition, Scope and Procedure.

In response to a 2016 Advisory Action, the committee created two new plans describing the process and costs for translation of Conference background material and forwarded a report, including the two new plans and four previously created options for translation, to the 2017 Conference Committee on Policy and Admissions.

In response to an additional consideration, a subcommittee was appointed to draft procedures that might be used for electronic polling between Conferences. It was requested that the draft procedures be in keeping with the Conference Charter and reflect current board voting practices regarding the establishment of a quorum and other matters. This committee did not meet, but the General Service Board is discussing this topic.

The committee received with appreciation a report from the general manager regarding how U.S. military and veterans receive information about A.A. from various parts of the upside-down triangle. The committee agreed with the general manager's determination that within the office, the Cooperation with the Professional Community assignment would be best equipped to support our trusted servants who serve this population.

The committee reviewed a grid containing a complete list of items submitted to G.S.O. that were proposed for the 2017 General Service Conference. The committee noted that this grid is published on the Conference dashboard in keeping with a 2016 Advisory Action. The committee agreed to forward to the 2017 Conference Agenda Committee a request to review the posting of the grid on the dashboard.

The committee considered the Advisory Action that "The General Service Board develop a new policy and a plan that enhances the General Service Conference agenda review and selection process, providing the area delegate members of the Conference a role in the vetting and selection of proposed agenda items through the Conference process." The committee forwarded a report on the Agenda Item Selection Process to the 2017 Conference Agenda Committee.

The committee explored the topic of delegate chairs at the January Board Weekend, with the result that all Conference committee chairs will be given a complete set of background material for their corresponding trustees' committee meeting at the January Board Weekend and that this background be sent to them when background is available for trustee committee members. A document called "Working Together," which summarized the results of this exploration, was created, describing the role of both delegates and trustees over the January Board Weekend.

Another result was a commitment to regular communication between the chairs of each trustees' committee and their corresponding Conference committee chair and between the AAGV Board and the chair of the Conference Committee on the Grapevine. The chair of the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference will communicate with the chairs of Conference committees that do not have a corresponding trustees' committee.

The committee discussed dress at the Conference and noted that there has never been a specific dress code for Conference.

The committee received a report from management describing the hotel site-selection process for a General Service Conference. They reviewed a report on the financial implications of moving the 2018 Conference back to New York City and agreed to that change of venue. Management terminated the contract with the Rye Town Hilton for the 2018 Conference and the 2018 and 2019 Conferences will be held at the Crowne Plaza Times Square. The relationship with the Rye Town Hilton continues to be positive and management hopes to reduce the financial impact of terminating the 2018 contract through future events held in Rye.

The committee reviewed a request that the General Service Conference consider that G.S.O. reduce the cost of the General Service Conference by 5% each year for the three Conferences immediately following approval of this motion by the General Service Conference. The committee took no action but noted that G.S.O. management is working to reduce the current and future costs of the Conference.

The committee forwarded to G.S.O. management a request that the General Service Board investigate the feasibility of hosting a future General Service Conference in Canada as additional background as management develops a strategic plan for the location and format of the General Service Conference. G.S.O. management will provide the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference with a report on the plan.

The committee considered a request that "Any changes, except for editorial changes to factual, statistical, capitalization, punctuation and spelling to *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service* be approved by the General Service Conference" and took no action. The committee noted that this request reflects the current A.A.W.S. Policy on Publication of Literature.

The committee considered a request that *The A.A.*

*Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service* be published electronically in all years, including those years in which it is not published physically. These electronic editions would be made available to the Fellowship through all relevant distribution systems, including the Alcoholics Anonymous website. The committee took no action and agreed that since the Service Manual had not yet been through the new two-year cycle that it was too soon to reconsider annual changes.

*William N., chairperson*

**Staff Report:** The Conference coordinator is the G.S.O. contact for General Service Conference members. The Conference process continues throughout the year and the coordinator corresponds regularly with delegates and alternate delegates who cooperate to make the annual Conference responsive to the needs of the Fellowship.

The annual meeting of the General Service Conference, which first met in April 1951, is the closest thing A.A. has to a group conscience in the U.S. and Canada.

A.A. members are encouraged to submit topics through their area structures for consideration by the Conference. Suggested topics may be forwarded to a trustees' committee for consideration and, where appropriate, referred directly to a Conference committee. Occasionally topics are submitted that come more appropriately under the purview of either the A.A.W.S. or Grapevine Boards. These items are accordingly forwarded to those boards for their attention. The Conference coordinator is responsible for:

- Serving as secretary to the Conference Agenda Committee and the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference.
- Assembling suggestions for the Conference theme and presentation/discussion and workshop topics to be reviewed by the Conference Agenda Committee, whose selections are then recommended to the Conference for approval.
- Working with the G.S.O. staff and general manager on planning and coordinating each phase of the Conference.
- Scheduling, assembling and coordinating translation of reports and other information for the Conference Manual.
- Working with the Publishing Department on the summer edition of *Box 4-5-9* and the *Final Conference Report*.
- Cooperating with G.S.O. IT professionals to develop and maintain necessary digital platforms for transmission of Conference material to Conference members.

*Rick W.*

## COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY/TREATMENT AND ACCESSIBILITIES

**Trustees' Report:** The trustees' Committees on Cooperation with the Professional Community and Treatment Facilities were combined by action of the General Service Board in April 1998. Then, in August of 2009, the trustees' committee expanded its scope to include service to Special Needs-Accessibilities Committees and oversight of Special Needs literature. The title of the committee was changed to Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities in 2009. In November of 2015 "Special Needs" was removed from the name of the trustees' committee and throughout the committee's Composition, Scope and Procedure. Since the 2015 General Service Conference, the trustees' committee has met three times.

*Cooperation with the Professional Community* — The committee reviewed the 2016 Conference Committee C.P.C. Advisory Actions and additional committee considerations and discussed the suggestion to include "A.A. at a Glance" in the C.P.C. Kit. The flyer has been added to the kit. The committee reviewed the suggested changes to the C.P.C. Workbook and submitted workbook changes to the Publishing Department.

The committee discussed the 2016 Advisory Action that an introductory paragraph to professionals be added to the pamphlet "Problems Other Than Alcohol," and forwarded to the 2017 Conference C.P.C Committee a footnote to appear at the bottom of page one with the following text: "This pamphlet is derived from an article written by A.A. co-founder Bill W. in 1958. Therefore, some of the language may be dated, but the issues addressed are prevalent today."

The committee reviewed the 2016 Conference committee's suggestion that the trustees' C.P.C. committee continue discussing "Three Talks to Medical Societies by Bill W." A subcommittee was formed and after reviewing the subcommittee's report, the committee recommended to the 2017 Conference C.P.C. Committee that the pamphlet be retired, noting that the pamphlet's language is dated and not helpful to today's communication about A.A. The committee acknowledged that this pamphlet is a part of A.A. history, adding that any retired A.A. publication remains available upon request from the G.S.O. Archives for historical purposes. The committee felt a future publication of service material sharing A.A.'s long history of speaking to professionals, from its origins to current times, might be a more effective reflection of presentations about A.A.

Noting an additional committee consideration from the 2015 Conference Literature Committee, the subcommittee on C.P.C. Publications also gave a report of their discussion regarding the creation of a draft letter from a mental health professional to mental health professionals, for possible inclusion on the professionals' page on the G.S.O. website, aa.org. The committee asked that the Publishing Department collaborate with a former Class A trustee in the mental health profession in developing language for the letter. The committee reviewed the revised draft letter and asked that the service piece (with minor edits) be added to the professionals' page on G.S.O.'s A.A. website.

The committee asked that a memo be sent to the appropriate committee with suggestions for revisions to pamphlets that fall under the purview of other trustees' committees.

The committee reviewed the methods currently used

in post communication with professionals who visit C.P.C. booths at national professional conferences and asked the staff secretary to work with the general manager and IT Department to support a pilot utilizing electronic methods of follow-up communication at one of the upcoming scheduled national exhibits. The committee also asked that a report be brought back at their July 2017 meeting.

The committee reviewed the subcommittee report on LinkedIn and agreed to forward to the 2017 Conference C.P.C. Committee a recommendation that a LinkedIn page be developed for C.P.C. committees and to include the subcommittee report as background. The committee noted that LinkedIn is a platform in which information about A.A. can be brought to professionals who come in contact with alcoholics.

The committee considered and agreed to forward to the 2017 Conference C.P.C Committee a request that the title of the pamphlet "Is There an Alcoholic in the Workplace?" be changed to "Is There a Problem Drinker in the Workplace?" The trustees' committee noted that employers may be wary of distributing a pamphlet which uses language that attempts to diagnose or label an employee.

The committee reviewed a request to add text referencing additional A.A. resources to the back of the pamphlet "Is There an Alcoholic in the Workplace?" and sent a memo to the Publishing Department regarding this suggestion.

The committee reviewed a request to develop content for email communication with professionals and asked that changes to the Guide Letters section of the workbook be explored and that this item be discussed at a subsequent meeting.

*Treatment and Accessibilities* — The committee reviewed the report of the 2016 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities and agreed to spell out the portion of the name of the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities, making the name of the committee the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities.

The committee asked staff to develop an Accessibilities Checklist that groups can use to inventory their accessibility to all alcoholics and approved a draft (Accessibilities Checklist SMF-208) which has been added as a service piece to the Accessibilities Service Kit (MV-48) and to the "A.A. Guidelines-Accessibility for All Alcoholics" (MG-16).

The committee asked staff to revise the Special Needs-Accessibilities Workbook and a draft was created and approved by the committee (Accessibilities Workbook M-48I) and is being added to the revised Accessibilities Service Kit.

The trustees' committee asked staff to revise the service piece "Serving Alcoholics with Special Needs" and the Conference-approved pamphlet "A.A. for the Alcoholic with Special Needs," focusing on changing the term "special needs" and updating antiquated language. The committee also requested the creation of an inventory of all A.A.W.S. literature containing the term "special needs" and reviewed a comprehensive inventory put together by the Archives Department of all A.A.W.S. literature containing the term "special needs."

The service piece "Serving Alcoholics with Special Needs" was revised and approved and the new service piece "Serving All Alcoholics" (F-107) is a component of the updated Accessibilities Service Kit.

A draft of the revised Conference-approved pamphlet "A.A. for the Alcoholic with Special Needs" (P-83) was created with the working title "Accessibility for All Alcoholics." The committee reviewed the draft and forwarded it to the 2017 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities.

The committee asked staff to send an Activity Update to Accessibilities chairs to inform them on the progress of changing the term "special needs" in A.A.W.S. literature and to notify them about the revision and creation of new service materials. The report was sent to all area, district and intergroup chairs.

The committee requested that language regarding apathy on page six in the Treatment Workbook be revised as requested by a district proposal. In addition, the committee suggested that the pamphlet "Is A.A. For You?" (P-3) be added to the Treatment Service Kit at its next update.

The committee also reviewed and forwarded to the 2017 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities the discussion topic: Discuss the unique needs of Armed Services veterans in the United States and Canada; and forwarded to the 2017 Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community the discussion topic: Discuss ways of improving communication with professionals who come in contact with Armed Services veterans and those currently serving in the military.

*Bill F., chairperson*

**Staff Reports:**

*Cooperation with the Professional Community* — Experience indicates that many professionals are aware of A.A., yet relatively few know what A.A. is or what it is not. It appears that even fewer have been to an "open" A.A. meeting. The staff member on the Cooperation with the Professional Community (C.P.C.) assignment, along with an assistant, provides information about A.A. and facilitates communication with those outside A.A. who may have direct contact with the still-suffering alcoholic through their professional work.

The C.P.C. desk responds daily to numerous inquiries from professionals. We frequently put these professionals in touch with local C.P.C. committees who respond with offers for direct contact, information about how to send clients to meetings, offers of literature or other means to assure that A.A. is a resource for professionals.

In 2016, we published two issues of our newsletter for professionals, *About A.A.* The spring 2016 issue featured an article entitled "A.A.'s Cooperation with Treatment Settings" in response to questions commonly asked by professionals regarding the distinction between treatment facilities and A.A., noting A.A.'s tradition of cooperation without affiliation. The fall 2016 edition featured articles that communicated about "Resources for Professionals Available at www.aa.org" as well as the article "A.A.

Welcomes Two New Class A (Nonalcoholic) Trustees." Currently, some 11,900 professionals receive *About A.A.* either by digital or print subscription. Another 4,000 visitors viewed our "About A.A. Newsletter for Professionals" page on aa.org.

Professional exhibits continue to result in requests for additional A.A. information as well as for personal contacts with local committee members. The C.P.C. assignment arranged for displays at 25 national or international conferences of professionals in 2016. At these exhibits, G.S.O. provides the booth space, display and literature; local C.P.C. committees coordinate A.A. volunteers who staff the booth to answer questions and provide literature and contacts. Professionals in a broad range of fields visited the A.A. booths at these national events. In the interest of extending the hand of A.A. to all who suffer, each year we include some Public Information events, such as the National Council of La Raza and Shape America. In addition, we referred 21 local exhibits to area C.P.C. committees and supplied C.P.C. material for several exhibits and events set up by local committees.

The C.P.C. desk serves as a resource for C.P.C. chairs throughout the U.S. and Canada. New chairpersons at the area and district levels receive welcome letters and applicable C.P.C. background material. Upon request, we assist local C.P.C. committees by sharing experience collected on this assignment. We encourage committees to send meeting minutes and to share local experiences for possible inclusion in future *Box 4-5-9* articles. Articles about local C.P.C. activities get published in *Box 4-5-9* throughout the year. This creates interest in C.P.C. service work with courts, clergy, doctors, medical students, educators and other professionals.

In 2016, based upon a widely expressed need, the G.S.O. Publishing Department began production on a local C.P.C. display and carrying case. The display is now available for purchase by C.P.C. committees for use at local professional exhibits.

The staff member on C.P.C. also serves as a liaison representative to several national organizations, such as the National Institute for Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism and, when requested by other twelve-step fellowships, provides information about A.A.

*Racy J.*

*Treatment and Accessibilities* — The name "Treatment and Accessibilities" has been adopted by both the trustees' and Conference committees. At their core the purpose of these two distinct committees remains the same. That purpose is to carry the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers, regardless of what challenges may stand as barriers between the alcoholic and the A.A. message. While the two types of service committees that make up this assignment may strive to carry the A.A. message of recovery from alcoholism to different populations of alcoholics, the overall purpose of the assignment is to share A.A. and service committee experience and information through literature, activity updates and other communications. The breakdown of committee chairs currently receiving communications from this assignment are Bridging the Gap (BTG), 292; Hospitals and Institutions (H&I), 166; Treatment, 873; and Accessibilities, 445. This total of 1,776 committee chairs is an increase of 592 from last year and an indicator of a constant increase over the last two years.

New chairs receive welcome letters, workbooks, service-related materials and service kits for their particular position and committee. These materials continue to be shipped via postal mail. At every opportunity, these trusted servants are reminded that the vast majority of information that they seek can be read on or printed from the A.A. website (aa.org). On their respective committee web pages they can immediately access the majority of committee service-related material, regardless of their position within the committee. In addition, all area-level chairs receive a list of other area-level chairs to share their local experience and activities.

The committee chairs receive updates on other committees' activities through articles in *Box 4-5-9*, as well as receiving updates from the assignment coordinator, which may contain ideas, activities, questions and/or solutions from other committees. These activity updates contain information about the General Service Office, requests for local sharing and clarification of areas of potential confusion.

The Treatment and Accessibilities assignment always welcomes correspondence from clients and professionals in treatment centers. In addition, communication is constantly received from alcoholics with physical, emotional and mental challenges. Each inquiry receives a response from the staff member who, if possible, links these professionals, treatment clients and alcoholics with additional challenges to the appropriate local committee member in the Fellowship who can serve as a resource.

The staff member on this assignment serves as secretary to the Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities, and as co-secretary to the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities.

*Clement C.*

## CORRECTIONS

**Trustees' Report:** The trustees' Committee on Corrections recommends to the General Service Board actions that support carrying the A.A. message to alcoholics confined in a variety of correctional settings. Since the 2016 General Service Conference, the committee has met three times.

In keeping with the 2016 Conference Advisory Action approving the video "A New Freedom," the committee heard regular reports about the video's finishing and distribution. The committee monitored the number of online views on aa.org and was pleased to note the number received in 2016 was 856,770. The committee requested numbers for similar videos in order to have some context. The video "A.A. in Correctional Facilities" had 43,246 views and the video "Your General Service Office" had 28,398 views. The committee also monitored 2016 sales and distribution of the DVD, noting that 559 copies were distributed, including an order of 175 copies purchased by

Area 7 to fulfill a request by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

In keeping with the 2016 Conference Committee's Additional Committee Consideration regarding additional-length versions of "A New Freedom," the trustees' Committee on Corrections gathered sharing from inmates, A.A. members doing corrections work and corrections professionals who viewed "A New Freedom" online or on DVD. The committee then discussed that sharing and agreed that a shorter-length version of about 15 minutes would be helpful for corrections professionals, for students and for training purposes, but that the current 30-minute length of the video is ideal for inmates.

The committee also discussed sharing from a district corrections chair in Canada who showed the French-subtitled version of "A New Freedom" to a French-speaking inmate group. The district chair said that about half the inmates didn't possess the reading skills to keep up with the subtitles. The committee discussed creating a dubbed version of the video, as well as creating a new 15-minute video with French-speaking inmates using the same successful production process. Likewise, they discussed creating a similar video with Spanish-speaking inmates. No action was taken.

The committee continued ongoing efforts to expand the Corrections Correspondence Service (C.C.S.) in Canada. A workshop on C.C.S. in Canada was held at the Eastern Canada Regional Forum, facilitated by the committee's Appointed Committee Member (A.C.M.) Robert M. and the committee secretary. The results of the workshop were discussed by the committee at their July meeting. In October, the committee heard a report about recent progress made with the governmental agency Corrections Canada. The committee discussed ways to share this service opportunity with A.A.'s trusted servants in Canada and with members behind the walls in Canadian prisons. In January, the committee looked at what areas of Canada were generating new inmate requests and where the awareness of C.C.S. might need to be raised. The need for more correspondents in French-speaking areas of Canada was also discussed.

The committee reviewed reports on the variety of A.A. literature currently available to inmates and reinforced that literature should come from local members whenever possible. The committee also discussed how to continue providing subscriptions of Grapevine and La Viña to inmates through the Carry the Message program, noting that in addition to areas, individuals may also sponsor subscriptions to inmates.

The committee had a lively discussion on carrying the message to Native American/First Nations people both in tribal jails and in other correctional facilities in the U.S. and Canada, and how literature can help this incarcerated population, especially the upcoming Navajo translation of the Big Book and the pamphlet "Many Paths to Spirituality." The committee reviewed sharing from trusted servants involved in corrections work with Native Americans/First Nations people and agreed that it should have a wider audience.

The committee received regular progress reports on the planning of the first National Corrections Conference in St. Louis, November 10-12, 2017. At least one member of the committee will be attending and participating on a panel. The goal is to hold the conference every year and rotate locations, much like the Bridging the Gap Workshop and National Archives Workshop.

*Yolanda F., chairperson*

**Staff Report:** The Corrections assignment is responsible for helping A.A. members and local committees carry the A.A. message to alcoholics confined in a variety of correctional settings. Approximately 600 pieces of mail arrive monthly from inmates, many requesting free literature, others asking to participate in our Corrections Correspondence Service (C.C.S.) or for help in making contact with A.A., either by asking for a meeting in their facility or for a prerelease contact. While not everyone who writes to G.S.O. has a problem with alcohol, all letters are answered; those indicating they have a drinking problem are provided with basic literature, information about Twelfth Step services specifically designed for the alcoholic who is incarcerated, and a warm invitation to participate in the Fellowship and the A.A. program of recovery.

If an incarcerated alcoholic requests free literature, he or she may be sent a Big Book, a copy of Grapevine or La Viña, a selection of pamphlets and the booklet *A.A. in Prison: Inmate to Inmate*, with an explanation that the enclosed literature is made possible through the voluntary contributions of A.A. members throughout the United States and Canada. However, this assignment tries to avoid being viewed as the primary source of A.A. literature, since carrying the A.A. message in this way is an A.A. service opportunity. Requests for multiple copies for an inside group, or ongoing requests from the same facility, are usually referred to local A.A. members doing this type of Twelfth Step service. This practice is also in keeping with past recommendations of Conference and trustees' Committees on Corrections.

The Corrections Correspondence Service, coordinated by this assignment, continues as one of our most valuable efforts. Many alcoholics who are incarcerated are looking to turn their lives around and crave outside support from A.A.s with whom they can share their experience, strength and hope. To fill their requests, this assignment puts out regular requests to the Fellowship through various channels for new correspondence volunteers — especially males.

One of the challenges to this staff assignment is explaining why — when A.A. members continue to volunteer their time — we can never completely close the gap. The short answer is that every day more and more alcoholics in correctional facilities discover that the root of their problem is alcohol and decide to do something about it! Once they come across the message of Alcoholics Anonymous, they want to share their journey with someone, just like the rest of us. In 2016, we linked 1,033 male and 499 female alcoholics in prison to an outside A.A. correspondent through the C.C.S. In order to meet those requests, we needed to be able to match the inmates with 1,510 outside A.A. volunteers. Although many of those

offered to write to more than one incarcerated alcoholic at a time, the number of volunteers needed remains large. And that is the data for just one year.

One of the most gratifying aspects of the assignment is communicating with area and district Corrections, Hospitals and Institutions, and Bridging the Gap Committees. The desk fields daily calls and emails from A.A. members doing corrections service work. In 2016, we passed along to area corrections committee chairs 204 requests from inmates, corrections professionals, and A.A. members taking meetings into correctional facilities for prerelease contacts, outside support or A.A. literature.

We send out a periodic activity report with updated information or requests for shared experience to each of these committee chairs. This past year included a call for male participants in our Corrections Correspondence Service; a request for shared experience from corrections committees on engaging members in corrections service and an update; and a request for shared experience with the Corrections Correspondence Service in Canada, which was sent to all the listed corrections committees in Canada.

G.S.O.'s A.A. website has a special section where most Corrections service material can be found, including current and past issues of the newsletter *Sharing From Behind the Walls* (*SFBTW).* This quarterly publication contains excerpts of sharing from A.A. members in prison who have written to G.S.O. This desk prepares selections from these A.A. members' letters and sends them a copy of the excerpt along with a request to reprint it in a future issue of *SFBTW*. The permission letter also mentions the possibility that the newsletter might be posted on G.S.O.'s website. Posting this anonymity-protected newsletter on the website and inviting members who take meetings into correctional facilities to print out copies is another way of ensuring that the sharing from this population of alcoholics gets into the hands of those who need it most.

A.A. members involved in corrections service frequently ask how they can get their fellow members "on the outside" to commit to speaking or sponsoring a meeting in a correctional facility. Often, people in the Fellowship unfamiliar with this type of Twelfth Step activity express the fear that the alcoholic in prison will not identify with an A.A. member who has not been to prison, and/or they are reluctant to commit to the amount of time institutions sometimes require for orientation seminars to qualify to go into their correctional facilities.

*Carrying the Message Behind These Walls*, a video created to encourage A.A. members to participate in corrections service, addresses many of the concerns that may hold members back from this rewarding Twelfth Step work. A new corrections video, *A New Freedom,* has also inspired many members to get involved in corrections work.

We receive many letters from inmates expressing their gratitude for the hope found in the literature received, as well as for the many dedicated members who take the time to reach out inside the walls by bringing an A.A. meeting into their institution or via our Corrections Correspondence Service.

*Jeff W.*

## FINANCE AND BUDGETARY

### Trustees' Report: 2016 Budget vs. 2016 Actual Results

*General Service Office:* At last year's Conference, we reviewed the proposed budget for 2016 and reported that G.S.O. expected a slight loss from operations of approximately $27,000. There were no actions of the 66th General Service Conference that required revisions to the budget. Instead, the very positive news for the year 2016 is that G.S.O. had net income from operations of $1,453,218, a net improvement of $1,480,000. This was due in large part to a significant and gratifying increase in Seventh Tradition contributions received from the Fellowship, which were $835,000 greater than anticipated in the budget. In addition, operating expenses were $707,255 less than budget. Additionally, gross sales of publishing activities for 2016 were $13,413,929, approximately $293,521 (2.1%) less than budget.

*A.A. Grapevine:* The 2016 Grapevine budget anticipated a net loss of $146,063. Instead, the actual results were significantly better, a net profit of $164,539. For the year, gross profit from all publishing activities was approximately $188,000 better than budget. Expenses for the year were approximately $113,000 less than budget as well.

*Reserve Fund:* At December 31, 2016, the Reserve Fund balance represented approximately 10.3 months of operating expenses, compared to a budget of 9.6 months. (The 10.3 does not include a portion of the 2016 operating profits that will be transferred in early 2017.)

### Estimates of Groups and Members as of January 1, 2017[1]

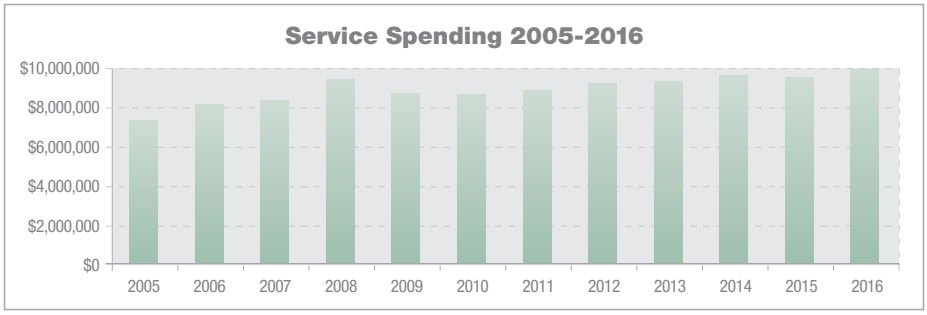
| | Groups | Members |
|---|---|---|
| United States | 61,258 | 1,276,165 |
| Canada | 5,078 | 86,237 |
| **Sub-Total** | **66,336** | **1,362,402** |
| Correctional facilities[2] | 1,413 | 34,903 |
| Loners, Internationalist, Homers | 1 | 29 |
| **Total** | **67,750** | **1,397,334** |
| Outside U.S. & Canada[3] | 50,555 | 705,850 |
| **Grand Total** | **118,305** | **2,103,184** |

*1. The General Service Office does not keep membership records. The information shown here is based on reports given by groups listed with G.S.O., and does not represent an actual count of those who consider themselves A.A. members.*

*2. U.S. and Canada only.*

*3. We are aware of A.A. activity in approximately 180 countries, including 62 autonomous general service offices in other lands. Annually we attempt to contact those G.S.O.s and groups that request to be listed in our records. Where current data is lacking we use the previous year's figures.*

## 2016 Actual Results vs. 2015 Actual Results




*General Service Office:* Our revenues come from only two sources, Seventh Tradition contributions from the Fellowship and profits from literature sales.

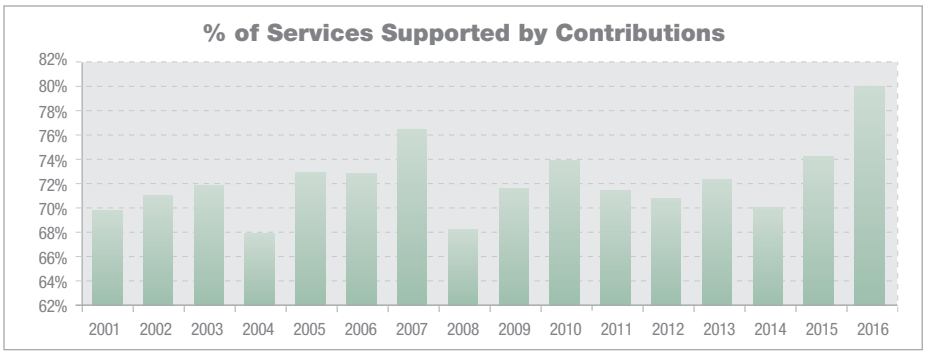
Contributions of $7,871,984, received from *groups and members* (excluding funds received from World Service Meeting countries) were approximately $762,638, or 10.7% greater than the $7,109,346 received during 2015. The $7,871,984 in contributions came from 27,542 groups, along with individuals and service entities. That, for comparison, represents approximately 41.5% of the 66,336 groups listed with G.S.O., up from the 40.3% reported last year. This increase in participation is positive news and is partly due to the increased use of the online recurring contribution system used by individuals making contributions on behalf of their groups.

As shown in the Contributions Statistics report, included in the Conference material, there were 66,336 groups, some 595 greater than the 65,741 groups reported last year. It is important to remember, however, that the statistics we discuss concerning number of groups, membership and averages are only a reflection of the information we capture on "our systems." We report to you what you report to us.

During 2016, 82,600 contributions were received, approximately 5,400 more than the 77,235 contributions received during 2015, and approximately even with the 82,927 contributions that were received during 2014.

During 2016, we processed approximately 7,400 online contributions ($564,025), which compares with approximately 4,600 processed in 2015 ($420,000). This shows the growing (although slowly) trend with 4,000 ($379,599) in 2014, 2,980 ($302,230) during 2013, 2,346 ($213,400) during 2012, 1,748 ($156,000) in 2011, and 1,056 in 2010, when the online system first became operational.

The recurring contribution function is an underutilized gem of A.A. Remember that individual members can set up an account to automatically charge their credit card either monthly, quarterly or annually. The individual has the option to designate to his or her group if desired or simply designate the contribution for G.S.O. This function has been a secret because at the end of 2016 there were only 542 members actively using this function. Perhaps the word is getting out because as of April 5, 2017, the number has increased to 617 active users. Spread the word!




Beginning in 2002, we commenced recording funds received on behalf of the World Service Meeting International Literature Fund as Contributions to G.S.O. Total contributions of $7,934,869 received by G.S.O., reflected in our 2016 financial statements, include approximately $62,885 received to help carry the message around the world from those participating countries. The comparable figures for prior years were: 2015, $44,800; 2014, $69,578; 2013, $36,130; 2012, $34,665; 2011, $74,588; 2010, $129,518; 2009, $133,715; 2008, $137,600; 2007, $144,400; 2006, $145,000; 2005, $135,000; 2004, $128,357; 2003, $102,900; and 2002, $108,000.

Turning to the other major component of our income, gross sales of literature were $13,413,929, an increase of $693,707 from the prior year. During 2016, approximately 860,674 Big Books were sold compared with 780,019 in 2015, 1,130,500 in 2014, 973,000 in 2013 and 947,430 in 2012. Not included in the 780,019 and 1,130,500 Big Books sold in 2015 and 2014 were sales of 12,749 and 177,888 copies of the 75th Anniversary Edition ($130,433 and $1,888,880), respectively. The large increase in 2014 units sold and associated reduction in 2015 units sold was a result of large bulk purchases occurring in the third quarter of 2014 prior to the October 1, 2014 price increase.

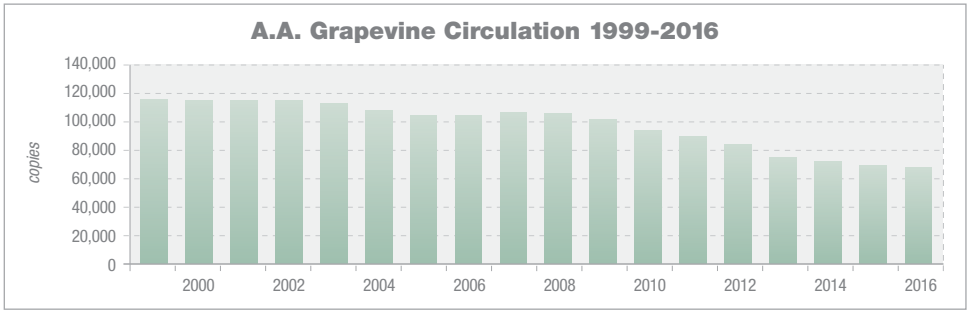
Printing and manufacturing costs, shipping expenses and royalty payments were in the aggregate $75,000 less than 2015. This decrease was a result of two items: (1) less sales equals less cost of manufacturing (shipping costs were slightly higher); (2) only a small amount of royalties as the last remaining royalty recipient passed away in 2015.

The gross profit from literature of $8,945,128 was $774,744 greater than 2015.

The combination of contributions and net literature sales resulted in total G.S.O. revenue of $16,880,440, $1,555,476 greater than 2015.

Total operating expenses for G.S.O. during 2016 were $15,427,221 compared to $15,119,339 in 2015, approximately $307,882 more.

For the year 2016, there were two significant variations from 2015 expense lines. The single largest item of travel, meals and accommodations




was $181,000 higher partially due to the hosting of the World Service Meeting. Contracted services was higher due to additional upgrading costs for software and other outsourced costs.

Expanding on the use of the Fellowship's money in providing services to the Fellowship, in 2016, $9,906,588 was spent to provide services to the Fellowship, approximately $277,089 more when compared with $9,629,499 spent in 2015, $9,725,210 spent in 2014, $9,507,582 spent in 2013 and $9,254,131 spent in 2012.

The 2016 service dollar was spent on the following activities: Group Services, 31.7% (which includes various group contact-type costs in addition to *Box 4-5-9,* A.A. Directories, records and files, contributions processing, and French services); the General Service Conference, 14.3%; Loners, International Assignment and Overseas Services, 6.1%; trustees' and directors' activities, 5.8%; Regional Forums, 7.2%; Archives, 10.6%; C.P.C., 4.0%; Public Information, 4.5%; Corrections, 4.6%; Treatment, 2.5%; Accessibilities, 1.0%; Nominating, 4.3%; World Service Meeting, 2.9%; and other various, 0.5%.

Contributions provided 80.1% of the support for these services and 19.9% came from the profit from literature sales. This compares with 74.3% and 25.7% in 2015; 70.1% and 29.10% in 2014; 72.6% and 27.4% in 2013; and 70.9% and 29.1% in 2012.

Dividing total contributions received in 2016 ($7,934,869) by the 66,336 groups listed gives us an average of about $119.62, up from last year's $108.82, while expenses to support services to those groups amounted to approximately $149.34 (up from $146.48 last year).

*2017 G.S.O. Budget:* Sales for 2017 are budgeted at $13,750,000, approximately 2.5% greater than 2016 actual. We are expecting a slight overall increase in unit sales, as those who purchased significant amounts prior to the general literature price increase on October 1, 2014, need to restock in 2017. It should be remembered that as we continue to strive to have literature available throughout our service Conference in Spanish and French as well as English, lower print runs in non-English materials usually result in higher production costs. Nevertheless, we generally have the same selling prices regardless of the manufacturing cost; therefore, lower overall gross profit margins for low volume items affect the overall gross profit percentages and make literature price increases necessary from time to time.

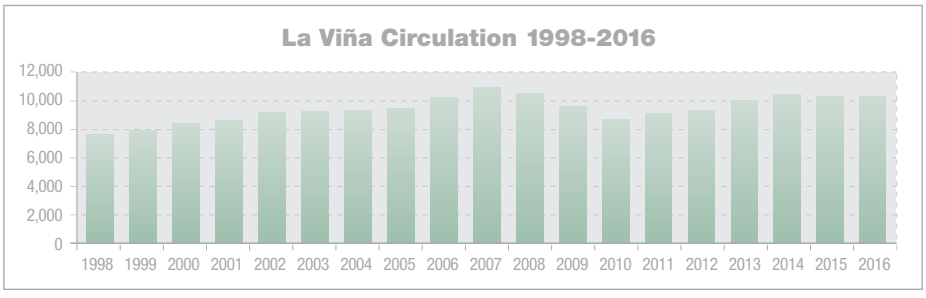
With contribution revenue in 2016 significantly ahead of 2016 budget, we have budgeted contributions for 2017 approximately 8% greater than the 2016 budget, but somewhat less than the 2016 results. This is not because we believe that contributions will decline but an effort to be conservative in our budgeting and not being too overly optimistic in anticipating revenue. A.A.W.S. is continuing to actively undertake various Self-Support Effort initiatives.

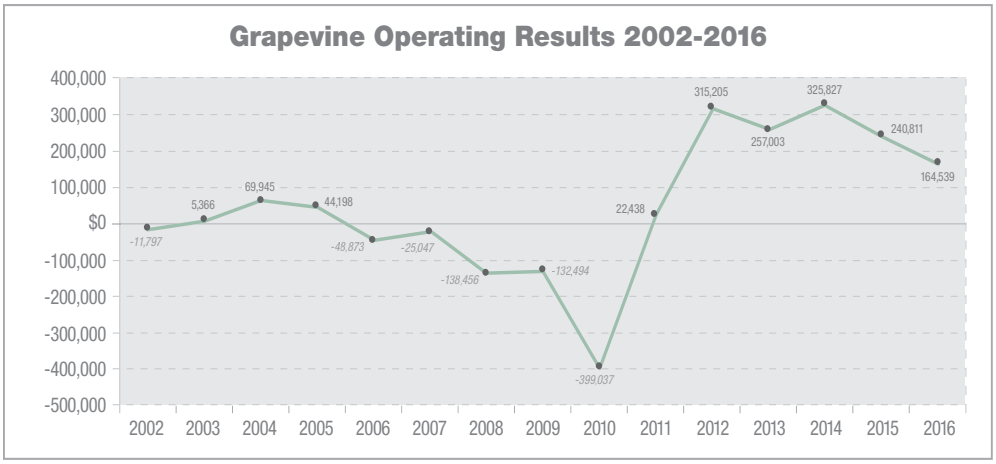
The 2017 budget anticipates approximately a 4.4% increase in costs when compared with 2016 actual results, with "people costs" being the principle drivers. The combination of inflation plus a number of existing and new staff positions being filled in 2017 plus a re-evaluation of compensation levels underlays this increase. During 2016, we had a very large number of employees either retire or leave G.S.O and some of those open existing positions were not filled before year-end. In addition, last year we noted a need for additional staff in the Finance Department and with the retirement of the CFO this year we anticipate filling this need. Also, as noted previously, we did reduce pension cost to both operating entities by nearly $500,000 a year because of the General Service Board transfer of $1,500,000 from the Reserve Fund to the Pension Trust in 2014. The Retirement Committees continue to review current benefits versus employer funding and investment results.

Based on these preliminary assumptions — approximately even sales, contributions conservatively budgeted, and a small increase in total operating expenses — the projection for 2017 is for a profit from operations of $397,798.

During the budget process, the A.A.W.S. Board, as well as the trustees' Finance Committee, remains cognizant of the level of the Reserve Fund. As always, management continues to assess expenses and operations with an eye toward reducing costs. Your trusted servants continue to explore methods to reduce the costs of operations, as well as assess the services supplied.

*Reserve Fund:* In 2003, G.S.O. lowered prices and increased discounts on literature. These changes were undertaken to lower the Reserve Fund, which was at that time approaching the upper limit of 12 months of combined operating expenses established by the General Service Conference. In subsequent years, it became






necessary to restore the revenue stream with pricing adjustments. As noted in previous reports, G.S.O. management was charged with presenting ongoing budgets with sufficient revenue that, with all things being equal, would maintain the Reserve Fund at a nine-month level of operating expenses.

The adjusted balance used for the number of month's calculation at December 31, 2016, of $14,958,734 amounts to about $225.50 per listed A.A. group.

*Grapevine:* Gross magazine income for 2016 of $2,126,224 was approximately $18,054 less than the prior year. Total magazine income includes the print magazine, single copies, back issues, Digital Magazine Subscriptions, GV Online, Digital Archives Project Subscriptions, the Audio Grapevine and the recently released new product of the Mobile App. The average paid circulation for print magazines, which had shown a long-term decline, essentially remained level in 2016, with 2015 being 155 subscriptions lower. The recent decline had been about 4% per, however, during 2016, the decline was mitigated by innovative promotional efforts, such as "Carry the Message." Actual paid circulation for the print magazine for 2016 was 71,811 compared with 71,966 for 2015 and 74,000 for 2014. This compares to 77,126 for 2013; and 82,258 for 2012.

Subscriptions for the Online & Mobile APP magazine averaged 5,618 for 2016, compared with 5,233 during 2015, and is roughly staying at the same level of the past several years. This was 5,262 for 2014; 5,175 for 2013; 5,535 for 2012; and the 2016 budget of 5,241.

Gross profit on the magazine of $1,449,218 was $31,001 greater than 2015, and $87,000 greater than budget. Other publishing income of $692,114 was $118,961 less than 2015 actual, but $114,927 greater than budget. Total income, including interest earned, was $1,920,246, which is $56,682 less than 2015 and $198,364 greater than budget.

Costs and expenses for editorial, circulation and business, and administration were $1,755,707. Costs and expenses were $19,590 greater than 2015 and $112,239 less than budget. The Grapevine reported a profit from operations of $164,539, which was approximately $76,272 less than the 2015 result of $240,811 and $310,602 greater than the budgeted loss of $146,063.

Grapevine's 2017 budget anticipates magazine and other content related income of $2,706,641 (approximately $111,697 less than the $2,818,338 realized in 2016). Operating expenses are anticipated to be $1,928,000, an increase of $173,000 over 2016 actual of $1,755,707.

This results in an anticipated loss for 2017 of $113,960, compared with a $164,539 profit for 2016.

*La Viña:* La Viña is the Spanish-language magazine approved by the 1995 General Service Conference. The magazine had a 2016 average circulation of 10,374. This compares with a 2015 average circulation of 10,355; a 2014 average of 10,379; a 2013 average of 10,145; and a 2012 average of 9,157.

During 2016, subscription income was $119,882 and direct costs of publishing were $67,141, resulting in a $52,741 gross profit. During 2016, La Viña realized approximately $22,126 from the sales of other items, net of costs. Operating expenses directly associated with the publication were $226,949. These include the editorial, circulation and administrative costs attributable to La Viña. Therefore, the overall net shortfall between revenue on the magazine and all costs to produce and distribute La Viña was $152,082.

This shortfall of $152,082 is covered by the General Fund of the General Service Board as a service to the Fellowship. The 2016 shortfall compares with the 2015 shortfall of $146,377; the 2014 shortfall of $132,026; the 2013 shortfall of $142,544; and $115,820 for 2012.

For 2017, the shortfall for the La Viña magazine is budgeted to be approximately $167,816 ($15,734 greater than 2016), with circulation anticipated to be somewhat lower (795). Since the inception of the magazine, approximately $2,099,100 has been invested in La Viña in excess of revenues generated. In 2001, the General Service Board recommended that La Viña continue to be published and agreed to provide the necessary funding for this service to the Fellowship.

### Other Items

*A.A.W.S. Self-support report 2016 work:* The committee heard various reports from A.A.W.S. on self-support during the year. The feedback on the "Your Seventh Tradition Contributions — Carrying Our Message Beyond Your Home Group" flyer that was prepared by A.A.W.S. and distributed at various venues (including the 2015 International Convention in Atlanta) has continued to be very positive. In addition, it was reported that A.A.W.S. is continuing discussions on other self-support ideas. Members are reminded of the option of recurring online contributions, the ability to make repetitive contributions automatically.

**Other Actions**

The committee developed "Policy for Excessive Annual Contributions or Death Bequests," which was approved by the General Service Board.

Consistent with the Seventh Tradition of self-support, the General Service Conference has from time to time established specific dollar limits on the amount of annual contributions (currently $3,000 per year) and bequests (currently $5,000 at death) that the General Service Office is allowed to accept from any individual member of A.A. These limits were established to eliminate the possibility, or even the perceived possibility, of undue influence in the affairs of A.A. Therefore, it is the policy of the General Service Board that any funds received from an individual member of A.A., either directly or indirectly, that exceed the limits established by the General Service Conference will not be accepted and will be returned.

The committee received a report from the subcommittee undertaking the "Reserve Fund Policy Investment Review." The committee accepted the report as presented and no change in investment philosophy will be undertaken, which was approved by the General Service Board.

The committee received a report concerning "Convention Accounting and Funding" deferred from the July meeting. The committee accepted the report as presented with no changes in the current practices.

The committee reported that to date approximately $1,350,000 has been spent on the 11th floor co-location project, along with the phase 2 upgrades. The total is expected to be approximately $1,420,000 compared with total budget allowance of $1,431,000. Only $1,000,000 has been drawn from the Reserve Fund, with the balance being paid from cash flow generated by A.A.W.S. results.

In summary, your trusted servants continue to vigilantly monitor the financial affairs of A.A. Steps have been taken over the past several years to enhance the net revenue streams of our publishing activities, to diligently manage the expense side of our support services and to address our long-term obligations, all with the goal of helping insure that the Fellowship's finances remain in good condition. Your General Service Board trustees and operating corporation directors continue to assess options going forward.

While the economic outlook for 2017 and beyond may be uncertain as the economy unfolds, we will continue to monitor events with our goal to insure the financial wherewithal to carry our message.

*David Morris, treasurer*

## GENERAL SHARING SESSION

**Trustees' Report:** Since the 66th General Service Conference, the General Service Board has held three General Sharing Sessions. In July 2016, the topic was "Communication." Rick W., G.S.O. staff member, shared on the topic, "Vehicles for Communication in A.A." and Scott H., trustee-at-large/Canada, shared on "What Do We Communicate? Does More Information Mean Improved Communication?"

During the October 2016 Board Weekend, the Sharing Session topic was "A.A. Unity — Our Common Welfare." Tom A., regional trustee, shared on "Challenges We Face Maintaining A.A.'s Unity" and Cate W., regional trustee, shared on "How Can We Foster A.A. Unity Today and for Our Future?"

In January 2017, the Sharing Session topic was "Trust, Authority and Reliability." Steve S., G.S.O. staff member, shared on "Decision Making in A.A. — Inherent Challenges" and David N., A.A.W.S. director, shared on "How Are Our Committees Doing for Those They Serve?"

Complete copies of these presentations are available and may be requested from the staff coordinator at G.S.O.

*Richard B., chairperson*

## A.A. GRAPEVINE, INC.

**Office Report:** Since the last Conference, A.A. Grapevine, Inc. has produced 12 issues of Grapevine; six issues of La Viña; two new books and ebooks (*Un día a la vez*, stories by AA members published in La Viña and *Our Twelve Traditions*, members' stories of experience with each Tradition, published in Grapevine); a wall calendar; a pocket planner; and an app.

A.A. Grapevine initiated a Fellowship-wide "Grow Your Grapevine" outreach effort for Grapevine in 2016, intended to involve the Fellowship and raise awareness of all things Grapevine. The area with the greatest number of responses submitted by February 2017 will receive a special section in Grapevine magazine devoted to that area. Grapevine posted a resource page on its website (aagrapevine.org/grow) to help the Fellowship view the progress. Also in 2016, the La Viña editor and board directors participated in events in places such as Phoenix, Chicago and Miami to celebrate La Viña magazine's 20th anniversary.

A *Grapevine* subscription app was introduced to the Fellowship after the Conference in 2016. The first phase was for iOS, followed by Android, Microsoft 10 and Amazon Kindle Fire. Also in 2016, La Viña continued a digital community effort using short message service (SMS). The community now comprises 1,000-plus members.

In 2016, A.A. Grapevine continued the collection phase for audio story submissions from the Fellowship. As of December 2016, A.A. Grapevine has collected 263 audio stories.

The A.A. Grapevine website continues to expand and in 2016 received an average of 41,000 unique visitors each month. Throughout the year, A.A. Grapevine worked on improving the website and will continue this work in 2017. In 2016, the Archives team began tagging stories to improve the members' experience when using the Story Archive. The project will be completed in 2017.

In 2016, Grapevine and La Viña magazines also continued the Carry the Message project in an effort to inform members and groups about an option to purchase subscription gift certificates to give to area chairs or local committees for distribution to members in need.

*Jon W., senior editor*

## GROUP SERVICES/*LIM*

**Staff Report:** To assist groups, G.S.O. develops service material based on an indicated need, sharing information and experience not found in Conference-approved literature. A seven-page list describes the service items. Examples of service material include: Group Handbooks; G.S.R. and D.C.M. Kits; A.A. Guidelines; Referral List of "Fellowships Similar to A.A.," "Is Your Group Linked to A.A. as a Whole" and "Anonymity Online."

Service material is available upon request. A large portion of the material differs from Conference-approved literature in that it has not come about through Conference Advisory Action. It is produced when there is an expressed need for readily available information on a specific subject or in a specific format. Service material reflects A.A. group experience as well as specific and timely information that is subject to change.

Current ongoing projects involving Group Services:

- The group services coordinator collaborates with the special projects manager regarding the three regional A.A. Directories (Canadian, Eastern U.S. and Western U.S.), G.S.O.'s group and service committee records, and intergroup and central office records and lists.
- Supervises the updating of G.S.O.'s available service material upon request, and in Spanish and French, whenever possible.
- Functions as G.S.O.'s liaison to approximately 475 central offices and intergroups in the U.S. and Canada. Coordinates A.A.W.S.'s participation at the annual intergroup/central office seminar, serving on the seminar's Policy and Site-Selection Committees. The 32nd Annual Intergroup/Central Office Seminar will take place in Northern Virginia in October 2017.
- Serves as a resource to the managing editor regarding updating of *The A.A. Service Manual*; serves as secretary to the Conference Committee on Report and Charter.

The *Loners-Internationalists Meeting* (*LIM*), a rotating assignment, is currently under the purview of Group Services. G.S.O. receives a monthly average of 20 shares that comprise the *confidential* bimonthly bulletin sent to Loners, Homers, Internationalists, and to Loner Sponsors and Port Contacts — members unable to attend meetings in person. The *LIM* bulletin includes full names and addresses of more than 250 participants who correspond with one another year 'round.

*Racy J.*

## INTERNATIONAL

**Trustees' Report:** This committee is responsible for suggesting policies and actions to assure that the A.A. message is available around the world, especially in areas where there is no established service structure. The committee provides shared experience and support for translations of A.A. literature in other languages and encourages the expansion of regional or zonal meetings. The committee is the primary link between the international A.A. community and the U.S./Canada General Service Board.

The 2017 Literature Assistance budget of $50,000 will allow A.A. World Services, Inc. to translate and publish a variety of foreign language books, pamphlets and reprints. A portion of this expense will be drawn from the International Literature Fund, representing contributions from A.A. groups and structures around the world. A.A.W.S. holds the copyrights on all foreign language versions of our Conference-approved materials and issues licensing agreements for publication and distribution to those countries which have an established general service board. When necessary, A.A.W.S. will translate and publish the material, subject to scheduling by the Publishing Department and approval of the A.A.W.S. Board. The Big Book is currently available in 70 languages, and other literature is available in approximately 92 languages.

The General Service Board and General Service Office receive invitations from other countries to attend events ranging from conventions, anniversary celebrations, conferences, and board meetings to office visits and regional assemblies. In 2016 trustees and staff members visited the 37th Central America Convention, the Germany General Service Conference and Costa Rica's 38th National Conference Meeting. Tentative international travel for 2017 includes the Cuba General Service Conference, the Barbados 55th Anniversary, the 6th National Convention of A.A. Peru, the 13th National Convention of A.A. Bolivia and the Zonal Meetings (Asia-Oceania Service Meeting, European Service Meeting, Sub-Saharan Africa Service Meeting and the REDELA —Meeting of the Americas).

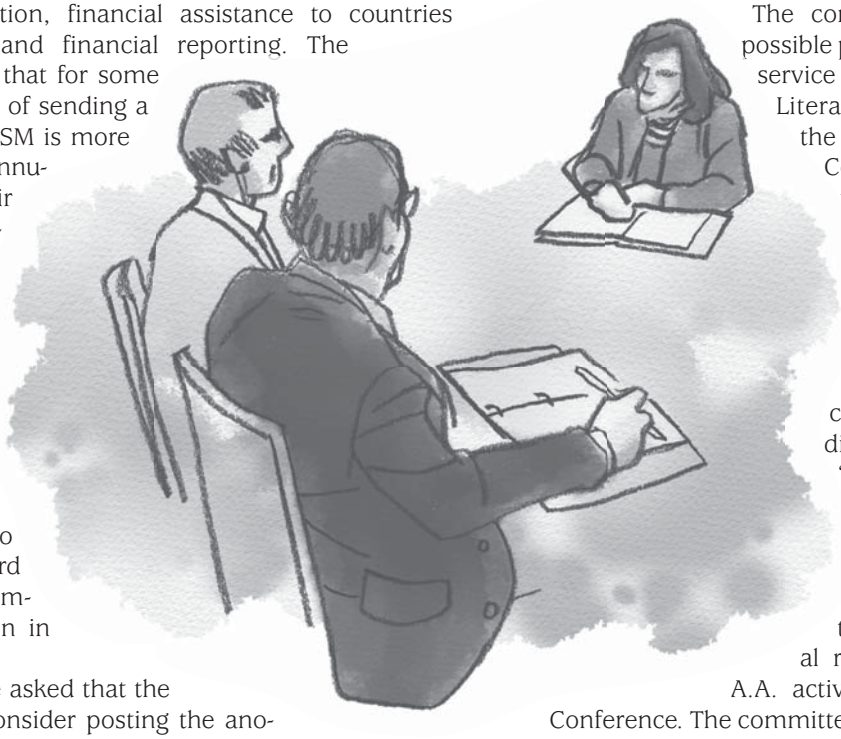
The committee reviewed a communication from the chair of the A.A. Grapevine Board noting that Grapevine had moderated a presentation/discussion session at the 14th World Service Meeting (WSM) in 1996, and inquiring whether there might be a possibility for Grapevine to participate in the 24th WSM The committee agreed to request that the WSM coordinator schedule Grapevine to participate at this WSM, if possible. Timing did not allow for this, but this request is on file for the next time the WSM will be held in New York (2020).

The 24th World Service Meeting was held October 23-27, 2016, in Rye Brook, New York, with the theme "One World, One A.A., One Language of the Heart." In attendance were 60 delegates representing 41 countries or linguistic zones, including two countries attending for the first time, Paraguay and Slovakia. Representing our General Service Board was first-term delegate Scott H., trustee-at-large/Canada, and second-term delegate Bob W., trustee-at-large/U.S. G.S.O. general manager Greg T. presided and staff member Mary C. served as WSM coordinator; staff members Racy J., Steve S. and Clay R. acted as committee secretaries. The WSM has a significant impact on the unity of A.A. and the effectiveness of our Twelfth Step efforts. WSM delegates visited Stepping Stones and G.S.O. and many were able to observe the General Service Board meeting the following weekend. The 25th WSM will be held October 6-11, 2018, in Durban, South Africa.

The committee continued thorough and wide-ranging discussions at each of its meetings this year in response to a request from A.A.W.S. to develop a self-support strat-

egy for the World Service Meeting. Noting that the U.S./Canada structure currently covers over 70% of the cost of the WSM, the committee reviewed expenses, budgets, delegate fees and financial responsibilities in light of the Seventh Tradition. The committee also reviewed the 24th WSM finances, including information on financial assistance and contributions to the WSM Members of the committee offered suggestions for decentralizing the costs for the WSM as the basis for a self-support strategy, such as encouraging zonal sponsorship and requesting the host country to take on more of the financial responsibility. The committee noted that self-support is a standing WSM topic, and Bob W. reported that the 24th WSM Policy/Admissions/Finance Committee discussed a proposal to increase the WSM delegate fee from $1,500 to $1,750 and decided not to propose an increase at this time. Every country that requested financial assistance to attend the WSM was able to attend and several countries contributed to support the WSM.

The committee also discussed changes implemented for the 24th WSM intended to better communicate financial information, financial assistance to countries requesting help and financial reporting. The committee noted that for some countries the cost of sending a delegate to the WSM is more than the entire annual budget for their G.S.O. The committee agreed to make the WSM and self-support a standing agenda item in order to better assure ongoing communication. The chair will write a follow-up memo to the A.A.W.S. Board sharing the committee's discussion in more detail.



The committee asked that the A.A.W.S. Board consider posting the anonymity-protected digital format version of the WSM. *Final Report* in English and Spanish on G.S.O.'s A.A. website, and also discussed the availability of the WSM *Final Report* in other languages, tabling further discussion to their July 2017 meeting.

The committee began discussion about encouraging greater participation in the World Service Meeting and will continue this discussion in 2017.

The committee discussed a request from A.A.W.S. that the trustees' International Committee review the costs of inviting WSM delegates to attend the General Service Board meeting following WSMs that take place in New York as guests of the board and noted that funds were allotted for this purpose for 2016. The committee looks forward to receiving updated financial information and continuing discussion of the costs of the WSM delegates observing the post-WSM General Service Board Weekend.

The committee reviewed and discussed a report from the subcommittee on an International A.A. Data Map and agreed that the initial version of the International A.A. Data Map PowerPoint presentation would illustrate the current known level of A.A. development in countries using the following categories: no known A.A. presence; lone member(s) of A.A.; A.A. groups; intergroup(s)/central office(s); and General Service Office. The committee requested staff to acquire a software license and produce an initial version of the International A.A. Data Map. The committee asked to see sample PowerPoint slides prior to their anticipated availability in early May 2017.

The committee agreed that it is important to communicate information about the WSM and A.A. around the world to the Fellowship, including the sacrifices made by all structures to participate in the WSM and carry the A.A. message to the still-suffering alcoholic. The committee agreed to discuss producing a newsletter sharing international activities at their July 2017 meeting.

The committee also discussed the possible positive impact of producing a service piece about the International Literature Fund and updating the service piece "Country-to-Country Sponsorship: Carrying the Message Worldwide," asking the secretary to request sharing on country-to-country sponsorship in WSM correspondence. This sharing would provide background for ongoing discussion. The committee tabled discussion of developing a "Statement of Purpose" for the International Literature Fund to a subsequent meeting.

The committee reviewed two requests asking for annual reporting about International A.A. activities at the General Service Conference. The committee noted that a trustee-at-large reports on the WSM at the G.S.C. every other year and the International desk provides a presentation regarding A.A. around the world. The committee agreed additional communication would be beneficial and will forward a request to the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference to provide annual reporting of International A.A. activities at the general service conference.

The committee tabled discussion of a proposal to form a secondary Conference International Committee to a subsequent meeting, and after collecting and reviewing additional background, will also discuss how to encourage participation in the REDELA.

We continue to be encouraged and inspired by the international A.A. community and general service boards and offices in other countries, which carry the A.A. mes-

sage to countless thousands in new regions and across difficult linguistic, cultural and economic barriers.

*Bob W., chairperson*

**Staff report:** The International desk receives correspondence from groups, individual A.A.s and professionals interested in obtaining information about A.A. in countries outside of the U.S. and Canada. Additionally, the staff member corresponds with 62 international general service offices and/or literature distribution centers.

The International desk is also responsible for communication with structures, groups and members outside the United States/Canada. Correspondence arrives at the International desk in many languages and is answered in the appropriate language, often accompanied by A.A. literature. In order to accomplish this, the staff member on the assignment is assisted by a bilingual (English-Spanish) assistant and outside professional services. Where there is a nearby office, we provide that contact information. We emphasize our trust in the fact that these members can maintain sobriety, help others and become independent in their own countries.

The International staff member benefits from the experience of G.S.O. staff, cooperation with the Publishing Department and the support of the trustees' International Committee for which he or she serves as secretary.

Other responsibilities on the assignment are:

- Serving as coordinator for the biennial World Service Meeting and maintaining contact with WSM delegates and their offices throughout the year.
- Maintaining close communications with our Publishing Department on requests for new translations of literature, and the beginnings of new general service or information offices that may be able to distribute literature to local members and groups.
- Each year, A.A. World Services receives requests to translate our literature into foreign languages. The Big Book has now been translated into 70 languages, and additional translations are in progress. Primary in consideration of each request is the need to ensure the integrity and authenticity of A.A.'s message. To that end, the Publishing Department has the responsibility of having each translation checked against the English original. In countries where there is a general service board licensed to publish or distribute A.A. literature, an approved translation is often financed and published there. Where a stable A.A. structure is not yet present, the A.A.W.S. Board undertakes the new publication when funds are available.
- Handling communications related to overseas travel, and attendance at Zonal Service Meetings. Our trustees-at-large (U.S. and Canada) are our delegates to the Meeting of the Americas (REDELA). Other Zonal Meetings include the Asia-Oceania, European and Sub-Saharan Africa Service Meetings.
- Working closely with our Records Department to ensure that our International A.A. Directory (for countries outside of the United States and Canada), which is published annually, contains updated contact information for G.S.O.s, central offices and intergroups, groups, foreign contacts and Loners around the world.

*Mary C.*

## INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS/ REGIONAL FORUMS

**Trustees' Reports:**

*International Conventions* — Since the 2016 General Service Conference the committee has met three times. The purpose of the trustees' committee as it relates to International Conventions is to work on plans for each forthcoming International Convention. The objectives of the International Convention are:

- To provide opportunities for a rededication of attendees to the primary purpose of A.A.
- To enable attendees to witness the success and growth of the A.A. program around the world.
- To let the world know that A.A. is alive, flourishing and available as a community resource, locally and internationally.

The committee acts and makes recommendations in order to fulfill the broad purposes of the General Service Board, as those purposes relate to the strengthening of the Fellowship and the advancement of its message, through well-planned International Conventions. The detailed work inherent in putting on the Convention is executed by the Convention coordinator and a professional Convention consultant.

In July 2016, the committee agreed with G.S.O. management's selection of Talley Management, Inc. as the Convention consultant for the 2020 International Convention in Detroit, pending negotiation of a contract with A.A. World Services, Inc. Some areas of concern were noted from the 2015 International Convention in Atlanta and the committee requested that solutions and clear proposals be presented addressing these concerns as part of the contractual process.

The committee discussed the voting process for International Convention site selection on the trustees' Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums and ultimately agreed to suggest to the chair of the General Service Board that, in the years when a site for a future International Convention is being selected, trustees from the regions where the competing cities are located not be assigned to the trustees' Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums.

The committee discussed the establishment of a separate prudent reserve for International Conventions, noting that this matter had been discussed and reviewed by the trustees' Committee on Finance with a report presented to the General Service Board in October 2016.

The committee recommended to the General Service Board that the 2015 International Convention database, and future International Convention databases, be available to both the A.A. World Services and A.A. Grapevine Boards, for communications with registrants for purposes

in addition to the International Convention. The first contact would be from A.A. World Services Inc., with an opt-in option. The committee also recommended that an opt-in feature be added to the 2020 International Convention registration form for members who would like to receive additional communications from A.A. Grapevine, Inc. or A.A. World Services, Inc., and that an opt-in box be added to the 2020 International Convention Online registration form for recurring contributions to the General Service Board.

In October 2016, the committee reviewed a list of themes suggested by members of the Fellowship for the 2020 International Convention and at the January 2017 meeting recommended to the General Service Board that the theme of the 2020 International Convention be "Love and Tolerance Is Our Code."

The committee discussed the concept of producing and selling video recordings of International Convention A.A. meetings interpreted in American Sign Language (ASL) and recommended to the General Service Board that video recordings of A.A. meetings interpreted in American Sign Language (ASL) be made available for sale at the 2020 International Convention in Detroit. The committee also reviewed the practice of selling audio CDs at International Conventions and requested that information be provided on other ways that the audio recordings could be provided to International Convention registrants.

Following review of a report from the subcommittee on Housing and Transportation at the International Convention, the committee recommended to the General Service Board that International Convention budgets include a contingency in the amount of 20% of the total budgeted cost, with consideration for adjustments based on the specific needs of each International Convention site. Additionally, a subcommittee was appointed to review the financial responsibilities and overall responsibility of each board regarding the International Convention.

The committee recommended to the General Service Board that, in addition to the A.A.W.S. and A.A. Grapevine souvenir publications, mugs and T-shirts produced by A.A.W.S., Inc. and imprinted with the trademark International Convention logo be approved for sale by A.A.W.S., Inc., during the 2020 International Convention and through the pre-registration process. Note: *This recommendation failed to pass at the October 31, 2016, meeting of the General Service Board*.

At their January 2017 meeting, the committee reviewed and agreed to forward the International Convention Site Selection Guidelines for the 2030 A.A. International Convention to the 2017 Conference Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums for their information. Additionally, the committee requested that the Conference Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums consider reviewing the dates utilized for the celebration of International Conventions (currently, the weekend around the Fourth of July holiday).

The committee reviewed a report from the Subcommittee to Review the Responsibilities Regarding International Conventions and recommended that the General Service Board affirm that, while the trustees' Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums should remain responsible to the General Service Board

for the planning and preparation of all aspects of the 2020 International Convention, the trustees' Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums asks that the A.A.W.S. Finance Committee fulfill its responsibility for managing and overseeing the performance of the vendor contracts for the 2020 International Convention. The committee requested that a full written report from the A.A.W.S. Finance Committee be made quarterly to the trustees' Committee on International Conventions/ Regional Forums.

The committee also recommended to the General Service Board that the composition of the committee's Composition, Scope and Procedure be updated to include the trustee director chair of the A.A.W.S. Finance Committee.

The committee recognized that the General Service Board and Fellowship may be better served by having the A.A.W.S. Finance Committee, which meets more frequently than the trustees' Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums, closely monitor the performance of convention vendors. The committee noted that the intent of this request is not to take the direction of International Conventions away from being a General Service Board event and responsibility.

*Regional Forums* — Since the 2016 General Service Conference, Regional Forums have been held in the Eastern Canada, Western Canada, Pacific and Southeast regions. The Local Forum in Area 49 was cancelled. The final Additional Forum was held for the Southwest Region in Denver, Colorado. The Western Canada Regional Forum included a small celebration to mark the 200th Forum since their inception in 1975. More than 1,800 enthusiastic A.A. members, including more than 1,000 first-time attendees, participated and learned more about the General Service Board, General Service Office and A.A. Grapevine.

Each Forum was viewed as an opportunity to exchange information among local trusted servants, A.A.s interested in service, trustees, directors and staff of G.S.O. and Grapevine. Equally important was the opportunity to hear sharing of experience, strength and hope, as well as challenges and successes of A.A. members on the front lines of service.

The committee has met three times since the 2016 General Service Conference, reviewing and accepting summaries of the evaluation questionnaires for the 2015 Southwest and East Central Regional Forums, each of the 2016 Regional Forums and the 2016 Additional Forum. The committee reviewed and approved the schedule for the 2016-2018 Forums and the board members attending the 2017 Regional Forums.

The committee discussed three requests for Local Forums and recommended to the General Service Board that the requests be approved for Local Forums in 2017, to be hosted by Area 72, Western Washington; Area 75, Southern Wisconsin; and Area 5, Southern California.

The committee recommended that the trustees' Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums annually approve at its July meeting travel of one member of the General Service Board (the regional trustee in the Local Forum's region if available) and one member of the G.S.O. or Grapevine staff to up to four Local Forums to be scheduled after the General Service Conference.

The committee recommended that Special Forums be reinstated. Additionally, the committee requested that an implementation plan that includes clarification and delineation of Local, Special and Regional Forums, be brought back to the July 2017 meeting.

The committee asked the staff secretary to explore ideas for trustee and staff Regional Forum presentations to be video-produced in anonymity-protected formats and to be made available to the Fellowship in additional avenues, including aa.org. The committee reviewed an update on the ideas and noted that a G.S.O. committee is addressing implementation of in-house video production. A report on the progress of the G.S.O. committee will be brought back to a subsequent meeting.

The committee requested that a plan to produce an anonymity-protected video of a virtual Regional Forum be brought back to the July 2017 meeting.

The committee discussed offsite attendance to Forums and agreed that priority be given to production of a virtual Forum. The committee discussed options for making the Forum experience more accessible, including videotaping American Sign Language (ASL) translators and allowing conference-call-based attendance for Spanish-speaking members.

The committee discussed cooperation with Central Offices/Intergroups at Forums and supported the idea to include outreach to offices in the duties of Welcome Committees.

The committee discussed the content of Regional Forums and noted the benefits of personal sharing within trustee and staff presentations. The committee will explore options for trustee and staff presentations to include a blending of written material along with opportunities for sharing their experience, strength and hope in service.

Based on evaluation questionnaires, the committee noted the value of the financial presentations at Regional Forums and requested that all Regional Forums include a detailed finance presentation by the General Service Board treasurer, and recommended to the board that the "Rotational Scheme and Staff Format for Regional Forums" be revised to include the treasurer of the General Service Board under item (1) "On the Program at All Regional Forums."

The following Forums are scheduled for 2017:

| 2017 | | |
|---|---|---|
| June 2-4 | Northeast | Mars, PA |
| September 8-10 | West Central | Sioux Falls, SD |
| October 20-22 | Southwest | San Antonio, TX |
| November 17-19 | East Central | Springfield, IL |

*Rich P., chairperson*

**Staff Reports:**

*International Conventions* — The International Conventions assignment entails coordinating the myriad details involved in producing the A.A. International Convention, held every five years. Working with four committees — Trustees, Conference, G.S.O. Planning and Host — the International Convention coordinator is responsible for bringing the Convention to life and ensuring that thousands of A.A.s can share and celebrate A.A.'s Anniversary.

While still in the early stages, initial plans are underway for the 2020 International Convention in Detroit, Michigan, July 2-5, 2020, to celebrate A.A.'s 85th Anniversary! Big meetings will be held in the Ford Field Stadium, and other meetings will take place in the COBO Center and local hotels in the downtown Detroit area. Notifications about the Convention, including housing and registration information, will be made available as the date gets closer. Information will be available on G.S.O.'s A.A. website and articles will be published in *Box 4-5-9,* which is mailed throughout the Fellowship.

*Julio E.*

*Regional Forums* — The staff member handling Regional Forums is responsible for coordinating and following through on all arrangements necessary for holding Regional Forums and Additional Regional Forums in the U.S. and Canada. These sharing weekends help foster wider communication and understanding among A.A. groups, members and trusted servants in a region, the General Service Board, A.A. World Services, Inc., A.A. Grapevine, Inc., and Grapevine and G.S.O. staff. Regional Forums are organized by the General Service Board and are regularly scheduled every two years at the invitation of a particular region.

The Regional Forums coordinator at G.S.O. distributes annual Regional Forum flyers and individual Forum registration forms to service workers in the region and coordinates Forum details: hotel arrangements, program, displays, on-site registration, etc. The coordinator works closely with the Welcome Contact who recruits volunteers to assist staff with hospitality, set-up and registration during the Forum weekend. The location for a Regional Forum is decided jointly by the regional trustee, area delegates and G.S.O.; suggestions are also made about presentations and workshops. The Regional Forums coordinator is also responsible for overseeing preparation and distribution of an "early bird" newsletter at each Forum and forwarding a Forum Final Report to all attendees. Advance planning and on-site work gets done with the help of a very able Regional Forums assistant.

In October 2006, the General Service Board implemented Additional and Local Forums on a five-year trial basis. In July 2012, the G.S.B. agreed to discontinue Additional Regional Forums after completion of the eight-region cycle in 2016. The board noted the cost of each Forum and the impact on the attendance and effectiveness of Regional Forums when three consecutive yearly Forums are held in any one region.

The General Service Board has agreed, as recently as October 2016, that regions continue to be encouraged to support Local Forums and that the trustees' Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums continue to annually approve, at its July meeting, travel of up to two members of the General Service Board, nontrustee directors of the A.A.W.S. or Grapevine Boards or the G.S.O. or Grapevine staff at up to four Local Forums to be scheduled between the end of the General Service Conference and the end of December. Local Forums are structured to meet cultural, accessibility and population considerations within the A.A. communities of each region.

The staff member on the A.A. Regional Forums assignment serves as co-secretary to the trustees' and Conference International Conventions/Regional Forums Committees.

*Steve S.*

## LITERATURE

**Trustees' Report:** This report offers a summary of the literature projects of the trustees' Committee on Literature since the 2016 General Service Conference.

Projects resulting from 2016 Advisory Actions and Additional Committee Considerations of the General Service Conference:

Develop a plan for the systematic review of A.A. recovery literature — In response to an Advisory Action requesting that the trustees' Literature Committee "develop a plan that includes a systematic schedule for the annual review of recovery literature items, taking into consideration the following: content, relevance, and usefulness; and prioritized by time span since last review," a subcommittee was appointed to develop a plan for consideration. A draft plan was reviewed by the committee and forwarded to the 2017 Conference Committee on Literature.

"Young People and A.A." pamphlet — In response to an Advisory Action requesting that the trustees' Literature Committee "revise the pamphlet 'Young People and A.A.' to include information about young people's conferences and that the proposed text be brought to the 2017 Conference Literature Committee for review," draft text has been forwarded to the 2017 Conference Committee on Literature.

In response to an Advisory Action requesting that the trustees' Literature Committee "update the pamphlet 'Young People and A.A.' to better reflect the experiences of young people in A.A. today," a progress report was presented to the committee and has been forwarded to the 2017 Conference Committee on Literature.

In response to an Advisory Action requesting that the trustees' Literature Committee "undertake a comprehensive revision of the pamphlet 'The Twelve Traditions Illustrated' with a modernized presentation of both text and illustrations to reflect contemporary A.A. experience," the Publishing Department developed sample revised text and illustrations of three Traditions. The committee reviewed and forwarded the sample text and illustrations to the 2017 Conference Committee on Literature along with a project cost estimate.

"A.A. and the Woman" pamphlet — A revised pamphlet was reviewed by the committee and forwarded to the 2017 Conference Committee on Literature.

"A.A. and the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic" pamphlet — A revised pamphlet (renamed "Finding Acceptance: A.A. for the LGBTQ Alcoholic") was reviewed by the committee and forwarded to the 2017 Conference Committee on Literature.

Develop literature for the alcoholic with mental health issues — A preliminary draft manuscript, "A.A. for Alcoholics with Mental Health Issues" (working title), and project update was reviewed by the committee; the committee forwarded the progress report to the 2017 Conference Committee on Literature.

"Inside A.A.: Understanding the Fellowship and Its Services" — The committee asked the Publishing Department to revise the pamphlet and requested a revised draft or progress report be brought to the January 2017 meeting. A progress report was reviewed by the committee and forwarded to the 2017 Conference Committee on Literature.

Plain-language recovery literature — The committee discussed the possibility of expanding the availability of "plain-language" recovery literature, in response to a 2016 Additional Committee Consideration suggesting that "the need for 'plain-language' recovery literature be explored by the trustees' Literature Committee." The committee agreed that a survey directed to the delegates and area corrections and accessibility committee chairs would be the most effective way to determine the need for recovery literature in plain-language format. The committee chair appointed a subcommittee to work on developing a survey and report back to the July 2017 meeting.

Additional Items reviewed, discussed and forwarded to the 2017 Conference Committee on Literature:

- Request for revisions to the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship."
- Request to retire the pamphlet "Too Young?"
- Requests for literature and/or language regarding safety in A.A.
- Request to revise the pamphlet "The A.A. Group."

The committee revisited their July 2016 decision regarding the request for a pamphlet and media reflecting recovery experiences of Deaf A.A. members, and rather than forward this request to the 2017 Conference Committee on Literature, the committee subsequently forwarded this request to the trustees' Committee on C.P.C./Treatment and Accessibilities.

At their quarterly meetings, the committee discussed and took no action on the following items:

- Request to remove the words "This is A.A. General Service Conference-approved literature" from *The A.A. Service Manual*. The committee noted that the Report and Charter Conference Committee is a committee of the General Service Conference with ample review processes.
- Request to reconsider the 2016 Conference Advisory Action removing text from Concept XI essay on page 58 of *Twelve Concepts for World Service*. The committee noted complete faith in the committee process and that the Advisory Action was taken with an informed group conscience.
- Request for a revision to *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* to reflect modern usage of language. The committee noted that the current introduction in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* adequately addresses the issue of dated language, idioms and historical references.
- Request for the development of a Second Edition *Daily Reflections*. The committee noted that there was not a widely expressed need within the Fellowship for a Second Edition *Daily Reflections*.

*Richard B., chairperson*

**Staff Report:** As secretary to the trustees' and Conference Committees on Literature, the literature coordinator works closely with the editors, writers and illustrators, along with the Publishing Department, on reviewing all new recovery pamphlets, books and audiovisuals, in accordance with recommendations from the General Service Conference. Final design and production of all this material is under the auspices of the A.A. World Services Publishing Department.

The Literature desk receives and responds to correspondence from A.A. members and groups about A.A. literature. Many of these inquiries are passed along to our Order Entry Department, our Customer Service representatives, our Publishing staff and our Archives staff. Contact is also maintained with all current area, district, and intergroup/central office literature chairpersons. Each newly elected literature chairperson receives a welcoming letter and guidelines to assist the chairperson in this vital responsibility. There are currently 67 area, 400 district and 22 intergroup/central office literature chairpersons listed with G.S.O. The Literature assistant is invaluable in supporting and helping facilitate the responsibilities of this aspect of the assignment.

The staff member on the assignment also gathers sharing for *Box 4-5-9*, working closely with the Publishing Department managing editor to continue to provide the Fellowship with news and notes from G.S.O. This collection of "news and notes" may include articles containing shared experience from A.A. Conference-approved literature that addresses questions raised in multiple phone calls, emails and letters to staff members. G.S.O. always welcomes committee sharing on service from the Fellowship, which may be included in articles so that *Box 4-5-9* can be an accurate reflection of both Fellowship and G.S.O. activities.

*Box 4-5-9* is published in English, French and Spanish with current quarterly distribution of 65,847 copies in English, 1,801 copies in French and 3,522 copies in Spanish. In addition, there are currently 11,653 English, 463 French and 974 Spanish subscribers to the digital delivery service for *Box 4-5-9* available through G.S.O.'s A.A. website, aa.org. Also on the website, the interested A.A. members can find a digital copy of every issue of *Box 4-5-9* going back to the original issue from 1956.

As literature is essential in helping to carry our message of recovery, this remains a challenging and rewarding assignment.

*Sandra W.*

## NOMINATING

**Trustees' Report:** The trustees' Committee on Nominating was first appointed by the chairman of the General Service Board on January 18, 1944. At that time, primary responsibilities were to "establish criteria for and to review resumes of trustee candidates and directors and to make recommendations regarding electoral procedures and matters which may affect the composition of the board and election to it." (History and Actions of the trustees' Committee on Nominating)

Since that time, the trustees' Committee on Nominating generally has met three times each year and, with the formation of the General Service Conference in 1951, began to meet annually with the Conference Committee on Trustees. The responsibilities of the committee grew over time to encompass criteria for all vacancies, whether in the ranks of trustees or among key service directors and staff members.

Activities of this committee in the past year:

- Class A Trustee Election: The committee accepted the proposed process for the 2017 search for a General Service Board Class A (nonalcoholic) trustee and created a short list of seven Class A trustee applicants. Five candidates were selected for possible interviews. Note: Selection of past Class A trustee Michele Grinberg as chair of the General Service Board brought the total number of Class A trustees on the G.S.B. to seven and the search for a new Class A trustee was cancelled.
- Regional and at-large Trustee Elections: The committee recommended to the General Service Board, as eligible for election in April 2017, all candidates submitted for East Central and Southeast regional trustees, and trustee-at-large/U.S.
- Board Slates: The committee reviewed and recommended proposed slates of General Service Board members, officers of the board, and A.A. World Services and A.A. Grapevine directors to the annual meeting of the members of the General Service Board in April 2017, following presentation at the 2017 General Service Conference for disapproval, if any. Note: Robert Slotterback, director of finance and accounting, will serve as assistant treasurer of the General Service Board.
- A.A.W.S. Directors: The committee recommended to the General Service Board that David N. serve as a general service trustee on the A.A.W.S. Corporate Board. The committee also recommended that Tom A. serve as trustee director for a two-year term on A.A. World Services, Inc. and that Deborah A. serve as nontrustee director following the 2017 General Service Conference. Note: At their January 2017 meeting the committee approved a request from A.A.W.S., Inc. to extend the service of Richard B., Eastern Canada regional trustee, for an additional year to fill the vacancy left by the death of general service trustee and A.A.W.S. director, Joe D.
- A.A. Grapevine Directors: The committee recommended that Ginger R. B. serve as a general service trustee on the A.A. Grapevine Board; that Cate W. serve as trustee director for a two-year term; and that Tommi H. serve as nontrustee director on the A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board following the 2017 General Service Conference.
- General Service Board Chair Search: The committee selected the names of the candidates to move forward for interviews for General Service Board chair, and in November 2016 put forward Michele Grinberg, Class A trustee.

*Committee's Composition, Scope and Procedures:* A subcommittee was appointed to look into several requests regarding the Composition, Scope and Procedures of the committee, including consideration of a diversity policy, open enrollment options for openings on the boards and possible unexpected vacancies on the years when a General Service Board chair is selected. Additionally, the committee created another subcommittee to review all resume forms used in the search for candidates to serve on the General Service Board and corporate boards.

The committee recommended that the following wording be added under Procedures (bullet no. 2):

> Throughout our service structure, our trusted servants should always be the best qualified. They are chosen based upon their skill sets and proven aptitude in their own business or professional careers which may be beneficial to our Fellowship. More importantly they possess strong leadership abilities rooted in tolerance, responsibility, flexibility and vision. They are sought and considered based on these criteria and with regard to inclusiveness and diversity.

The committee also recommended that the following statement be added to Procedure No. 4 (Procedures for Election of Class A Trustees, bullet no. 2):

> Upon learning of a Class A trustee vacancy, the trustees' Committee on Nominating shall request that the General Service Board take an inventory of the skills and backgrounds of its current members and identify areas which may be lacking in order to provide that information to the trustees' Committee on Nominating.

Additionally, the committee recommended that the language in Procedure No. 14 (Selection of Chairperson of the G.S.B.) be updated to reflect current practice and to read:

> It is suggested that the trustees' Committee on Nominating conduct their agreed-upon interviews during the Summer Quarterly Board meeting during an Executive Session of their committee. Following the interviews, they select a minimum of two or a maximum of three candidates to forward to the General Service Board for interviews at the Fall Quarterly Board meeting. These candidates are then interviewed and a chairperson selected during an Executive Session of the General Service Board on Sunday of the Fall Quarterly Board Weekend. The report of this process and the new chair's name would be reported at the next General Service Board meeting following this Executive Session.

The committee requested that a communication be sent to the General Service Board and to A.A.W.S., Inc. and

A.A. Grapevine, Inc. requesting that current enrollment materials utilized by each board be revised to include "open enrollment" options, suitable to each board, and that a report on how this objective will be accomplished be brought to a subsequent meeting of the committee.

The committee also recommended that the following revised resume forms be approved, reflecting updates in style and language in line with current practices, and suggestions from the 2016 Conference Committee on Trustees intended to allow candidates the opportunity to share a broader view of their experience: A.A. Grapevine Director Resume Form — Procedure No. 1; A.A. World Services Director Resume Form — Procedure No. 1; Appointed Committee Member Resume Sheet — Procedure No. 2; General Service Trustee Resume Form — Procedure No. 5; General Manager Resume Form — Procedure No. 9; Regional Trustee Resume Form — Procedure No. 11; Trustee-At-Large U.S./Canada Resume Form — Procedure No. 12.

The committee also recommended to the General Service Board the addition of the resume form for Selection of Chairperson of the G.S.B. — Procedure No. 14, which is not currently part of the procedure.

The committee recommended to the General Service Board that the sample announcement letter for Procedures for Election of Class A Trustees — Procedure No. 4, be updated to include language suggesting that Class A trustee candidates be encouraged to submit a cover letter with their resumes. The announcement letter would suggest inclusion of the candidates' experience and current interaction with A.A., as well as their reasons for volunteering their services to the General Service Board, in a cover letter accompanying their professional resume.

*Appointed Committee Members:* The committee recommended that Robert M. of St. Catherine, Ontario, be appointed for an additional one-year term on the trustees' Committee on Corrections; that Doug G. of San Jose, California, be appointed for an additional one-year term on the trustees' Committee on Literature; that Cindy F. of Fairfax, Virginia, be appointed for an additional one-year term on the trustees' Committee on Literature; that the trustees' C.P.C./Treatment and Accessibilities Committee and the trustees' P.I. Committee conduct a search for appointed committee members; and that the trustee's Committee on Literature consider searching for an additional appointed committee member to assist in the development of the Young People's pamphlet project.

**Other:** *Videotaped introductions from regional trustee candidates*: The committee discussed a request to provide videotaped introductions of regional trustee candidates during the regional trustee elections at the General Service Conference and took no action. After thoughtful discussion, the committee agreed that the spiritual nature of the Third Legacy Procedure provides opportunity for the most suitable candidate to be elected.

*Voting procedures for electing trustee-at-large/U.S.:* The committee reviewed information regarding the voting process for electing trustee-at-large/U.S. and agreed to forward the request to the 2017 General Service Conference Committee on Trustees.

*Election process for the officers of A.A.W.S.:* The committee reviewed historical information on the election process for the officers of A.A.W.S., Inc. and a subcommittee presented a report and conclusion that the current process for election of officers on the A.A. World Services and Grapevine Boards allows for the directors on each board to disapprove or abstain if not in agreement with the slate. If a proposed slate were not approved by one of the affiliate boards it would be up to the directors of the affected board to decide how to proceed.

The subcommittee noted that the use of language in agendas and minutes of board meetings indicating approval of a slate of officers, instead of election of officers, would be appropriate to avoid confusion and would accurately reflect current practice.

The committee suggested that the findings of the subcommittee be shared with the A.A.W.S. and A.A. Grapevine corporate boards for their review and consideration.

*2016 Conference recommendation for unexpected vacancy of regional trustees:* The committee discussed the 2016 Conference Advisory Action regarding unexpected vacancy of regional trustees and agreed to forward the 2016 Conference Advisory Action to the General Service Board Ad Hoc Committee on the General Service Board Bylaws for review and implementation.

*Trustees emeriti of the General Service Board:* The committee recommended that Elaine McDowell (nonalcoholic Class A trustee) be reinstated as a trustee emerita of the General Service Board. Additionally, a subcommittee report was reviewed with a recommendation to the General Service Board that:

a. At the expense of the General Service Board (G.S.B.), the most recent past chair of the G.S.B. be invited to attend and participate in *all General Service Board Weekends and General Service Conferences* for their first term as past chair.

b. At the expense of the General Service Board, in addition to the immediate past chair trustee emeritus/a of the G.S.B.s, two additional past chair trustees emeriti of the G.S.B. would be invited to attend each *Board Weekend*. For each meeting, an invitation to participate at the expense of the G.S.B. would be extended to two additional trustees emeriti, beginning with the trustee emeritus/a that served just immediately prior to the past chair trustee emeritus/a that is invited as noted above (a.), and subsequently rotating invitations through the remaining trustees emeriti, in order of most recent to longest rotated. If an invitation is declined, the invitation may be extended to the next trustee emeritus/a to be invited, to attend.

c. At the expense of the G.S.B., in addition to the immediate past chair trustee emeritus/a of the G.S.B., one additional past chair trustee emeritus/a of the G.S.B. would be invited to each *General Service Conference (G.S.C.)*. For each G.S.C., an invitation to participate at the expense of the G.S.B. would be extended to one additional trustee emeritus/a, beginning with the trustee emeritus/a who served just immediately prior

to the past chair trustee emeritus/a who is invited as noted above (a), and subsequently rotating invitations through the remaining trustee emeriti, in order of most recent to longest rotated. If an invitation is declined, the invitation may be extended to the next trustee emeritus to be invited to attend.

d. The chair of the General Service Board may, if necessary, also issue a one-time invitation to one additional trustee emeritus/a to attend at the Board's expense.

e. All trustees emeriti not being funded are welcome to attend and participate in all Board Weekends and the General Service Conference at their own expense.

Note: This recommendation failed to pass at the January 30, 2017, meeting of the General Service Board.

Additionally, the committee agreed to suggest that the 2017-2018 trustees' Committee on Nominating consider creating a subcommittee with the task of defining the position of trustee emeritus/a, describing the term, eligibility and responsibilities of the position, including rotation and participation on any of the trustees' committees.

*Recusal of General Service Board chair candidates:* The committee reviewed Procedure No. 14 (Selection of Chairperson of the General Service Board) regarding the recusal of General Service Board chair candidates serving on the trustees' Committee on Nominating from the selection process and agreed to revisit the discussion at their July 2017 meeting, pending a decision from the General Service Board regarding a proposed eligibility requirement for General Service Board chair candidates. Note: At their January 31, 2017, meeting the General Service Board approved a requirement that no current trustee be eligible to apply for chair of the General Service Board until completion of their term as trustee.

*Rotation and assignment of trustees on General Service Board committees:* The committee briefly discussed the rotation and assignment of trustees on trustees' committees and agreed that Procedure No. 7 (Procedures for Assigning Trustees and Directors to General Service Board Committees) provides guidance adequately clarifying the need for rotation in the assignment of trustees and directors to General Service Board committees.

*General Service Board interview guidelines:* The committee considered creating General Service Board interview guidelines and requested that the General Service Office staff, in consultation with Grapevine staff, develop draft guidelines for conducting General Service Board, A.A.W.S., Inc. and A.A. Grapevine, Inc. Board interviews to be brought back for review at a subsequent meeting.

*Requirement for general manager and General Service Board chair candidates:* The committee discussed a proposal to require that candidates for General Service Office general manager and General Service Board chair not be eligible to apply for these positions until one year after rotation off the General Service Board and recommended that no current trustee shall be eligible to apply for the position of general manager until completion of their term as trustee and rotation off the General Service Board. The committee also recommended that no current trustee shall be eligible to stand for the position of chair of the General Service Board until completion of their term as trustee and rotation off the General Service Board.

*Bylaws of A.A. World Services, Inc. and A.A. Grapevine, Inc. as appendices to* The A.A. Service Manual*:* The committee agreed to forward for consideration by the 2017 Conference Committee on Report and Charter a request to add the bylaws of A.A. World Services, Inc. and AA Grapevine, Inc. as appendices to *The A.A. Service Manual*.

*Number of regions and number of regional trustees serving on the General Service Board:* The committee agreed to forward to the 2017 Conference Committee on Trustees a request that the 2017 General Service Conference discuss the need to restructure the number of regions and number of regional trustees serving on the General Service Board.

*Chet P., chairperson*

**Staff Report:** The staff member on this assignment is responsible to the trustees' Committee on Nominating and to the Conference Committee on Trustees, serving as secretary to these committees as well as to trustees' subcommittees. Since the last Conference, the staff member prepared background, minutes and reports for three quarterly trustees' committee meetings. The staff member worked with the trustees' Nominating Committee on vacancy announcements and sent time commitment and interest status letters to Class A candidates. The staff member also coordinated the review of resumes for Class B trustee candidates who made their names available to participate in this year's Conference elections procedure.

*Julio E.*

## PUBLIC INFORMATION

**Trustees' Report:** The trustees' Committee on Public Information is charged with the responsibility of helping the membership carry the A.A. message of recovery through the general public to the alcoholic who still suffers. We do this by recommending and coordinating activities which include: creating a greater public understanding of the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous; producing video and audio public service announcements (P.S.A.s); preparing and posting press releases on aa.org; coordinating health fairs and other community and school exhibits with local P.I. committees; conducting the triennial A.A. Membership Survey; and carrying A.A.'s message through electronic as well as print media.

*Composition, Scope and Procedure* — The committee reviewed their Composition, Scope and Procedure and recommended adding Item 4 under Scope to read: "Provide guidance regarding all of A.A.'s publicly available communications across both A.A. World Services and A.A. Grapevine focusing on opportunities for cooperation, efficiency and improvement"; and revise Item 5 under Procedure to read: "Ongoing development and annual review of a Comprehensive Media Plan for Alcoholics Anonymous guided by the goal, target audience and message in the most recent Public Information Comprehensive Media Plan. Such efforts should rely on experts in public relations and related fields within the Fellowship whenev-

er possible and may reach outside the Fellowship when needed."

*Anonymity* — The committee reviewed and accepted the text of the annual Anonymity Letter to the Media, which includes a link to a brief video on anonymity, to be emailed to approximately 30,000 media professionals. The committee also reviewed and accepted the text of the Memo to Tapers, to be distributed in 2017 in the same manner as 2016, including copying all delegates.

*G.S.O.'s A.A. Website* — The committee reviewed quarterly reports from the A.A.W.S. Board regarding changes to aa.org, updates on website activity, a summary of requests from the Fellowship regarding the website and the status of, or actions taken in response to, those requests. An annual report of the A.A.W.S. Board on G.S.O.'s A.A. Website was forwarded to the 2017 Conference Committee on Public Information.

*A.A. Grapevine/La Viña Website* — The committee reviewed quarterly reports from the Grapevine Board on the Grapevine/La Viña Website activity.

*Public Information Comprehensive Media Plan* — In July, a subcommittee was appointed to review and develop the Public Information Comprehensive Media Plan. The committee reviewed the subcommittee's final report and agreed to forward it to the 2017 Conference Committee on Public Information, along with a suggestion to consider updating the pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity"; a report exploring ways of providing guidance to the Fellowship on carrying the A.A. message online and in social media; and the 2017 Public Information Comprehensive Media Plan.

The committee also agreed to forward to the A.A.W.S. and A.A. Grapevine Boards a request to consider transferring the A.A. Videos for Young People project from A.A.W.S. to A.A. Grapevine.

In response to an Additional Committee Consideration of the 2016 Conference Committee on Public Information to explore ways of providing guidance to the Fellowship on carrying the A.A. message to the public online and in social media, the committee requested that the service material "A.A. Guidelines-Internet" and "Frequently Asked Questions about A.A. Websites" be updated and that a progress report or draft of updated materials be brought back to the committee for review.

*Google for Nonprofits Implementation Plan* — In July, a subcommittee was appointed to develop an implementation plan for a G.S.O. Google for Nonprofits account for carrying the A.A. message to the public. The committee reviewed the final report of the subcommittee on implementing a Google for Nonprofits account and agreed to forward the report, including a recommendation to adopt the report's plan for a G.S.O. Google for Nonprofits account focused on the YouTube Nonprofit Program, to the 2017 Conference Committee on Public Information.

*Twitter Implementation Plan* — In July, a subcommittee was appointed to develop an implementation plan for a G.S.O. Twitter account for carrying the A.A. message to the public. The committee reviewed the subcommittee's final report and agreed to forward it to the 2017 Conference Committee on Public Information, including a recommendation to adopt the report's plan for a G.S.O. Twitter account focused on sharing information about A.A. with the general public, still-suffering alcoholics and caring professionals.

*2017 Membership Survey* — In July, a subcommittee was appointed to review the timing and process of conducting the A.A. Membership Survey and to review the Membership Survey Questionnaire. The subcommittee reviewed the Questionnaire and discussed three requests to add to the survey:

1. A suggestion to add a question(s) regarding the belief or non-belief of the member in a "Higher Power."
2. A suggestion to add a question(s) to determine the member's participation in "service beyond the home group."
3. A suggestion from the trustees' 2014 Membership Survey subcommittee to consider asking the primary language of the member filling out the questionnaire.

After extensive discussion, the committee took no action on these requests, noting the subjective nature of the "Higher Power" and "service beyond the home group" questions and determining that requesting "primary language" information was outside the historical scope of the A.A. Membership Survey. The committee also agreed to table to a subsequent meeting a request from Area 79, British Columbia/Yukon, to consider changing the gender question on the A.A. Membership Survey to allow for a better reflection of the diversity of our membership.

The committee agreed to forward the final report to the 2017 Conference Committee on Public Information, and after discussing the process and methodology of the A.A. Membership Survey, took no action on the subcommittee's recommendation that an A.A. Membership Survey be conducted in 2017.

*Video PSAs* — The committee reviewed the final report from the subcommittee on the Usefulness and Relevance of Public Service Announcements that found "Doors," "My World" and "Tengo Esperanza" to still be useful and relevant, and agreed to forward the report to the 2017 Conference Committee on Public Information. Distribution and tracking reports for the new video P.S.A. "I Have Hope" will be forwarded to the 2017 Conference Committee on Public Information as background.

*Literature* — The committee reviewed the suggestions from the trustees' C.P.C./Treatment and Accessibilities Committee for revisions to the P.I. Committee pamphlet "Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings" and agreed to forward to the 2017 Conference Committee on Public Information revised text for the pamphlet "Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings."

The committee remains committed to doing all it can to assist the membership in its service of carrying the message of recovery to the general public and to the alcoholic who still suffers, and welcomes suggestions from the Fellowship as to what more can be done.

*Ivan Lemelle, chairperson*

**Staff Report:** This assignment is charged with assisting the A.A. members who carry our message to the suffering alcoholic through the general public. These A.A. members

share information about A.A. at schools, health fairs, community events and libraries and through all forms of media. Below are some of the ways that this task is carried out:

- Communicate with 839 P.I. committee chairpersons at the area, district, intergroup/central office and group levels providing them with Workbooks, Guidelines, and current shared information on Public Information activity.
- Provide literature to supplement the efforts of local Public Information committees at local health and community fairs, sharing information about Alcoholics Anonymous.
- Provide P.I. committees with information regarding the production and distribution of video and audio public service announcements (PSAs), in order to enhance their efforts on the local level. This assignment also forwards media requests for P.S.A.s to local committees which serve as A.A. resources.
- Respond to all media inquiries that come to the office, providing them with accurate information about Alcoholics Anonymous. Coordinate media coverage of A.A.'s International Conventions, held every five years, and work closely with Publishing Department regarding development and distribution of press releases.
- Read and review media stories that mention Alcoholics Anonymous and share relevant information as needed. Receive information from members regarding anonymity breaks at the level of press, radio, films, television and the Internet.
- Pass along instances of anonymity breaks in the media to the delegate in the area in which the break occurred, and provide them with an opportunity to contact the member and share experience regarding our Eleventh Tradition.
- Send out the Annual Anonymity Letter to the media. The June 2016 letter was emailed to more than 29,500 media outlets in the U.S. and Canada. The email included a link to view a brief video on anonymity on aa.org. The letter was distributed to reporters, editors and publishers at a variety of outlets in print, broadcast and electronic media.
- Coordinate production of new television and radio PSAs as requested by the Conference, and work with the Publishing Department regarding available formats and delivery options.
- Work closely with Publishing Department regarding development and updating of Conference-approved literature and assignment-related service material.
- Coordinate the triennial A.A. Membership Survey and work with the Publishing Department to publish the Survey results in pamphlet form and as a table display for information about Alcoholics Anonymous at public events.
- Participate as a member of the G.S.O. Website Committee, which reviews suggested changes to the aa.org website, a key aspect of our Public Information efforts.

The goal of the Public Information assignment at G.S.O. is to see that the A.A. message of recovery reaches the still-suffering alcoholic by keeping the general public informed about the A.A. program of hope and recovery from alcoholism.

*Clay R.*

## STAFF COORDINATOR

**Staff Report:** The General Service Office provides services to A.A. groups and members, and shares A.A. experience when available. Twelve A.A. members comprise the "G.S.O. Staff" with each person responsible for a functional assignment in addition to responding to requests from a specific region in Canada and the U.S., or from other countries. The staff coordinator shares responsibility for corresponding with members from the Southwest region, covering the busy six months of the year for the Conference coordinator.

In 2016, the staff received 85,992 pieces of correspondence by mail, email and fax. Additionally, the staff answered more than 13,224 phone calls. The staff coordinator helps to ensure that letters are answered when staff members are involved in large projects or away from the office to attend A.A. events, or at times of illness or vacation. Mail, email, faxes, etc., are responded to within ten business days.

G.S.O. staff benefits from the experience of A.A. groups gathered over many years. These resources are passed on to members who seek guidance for their group, central office, district or area assembly. Questions and requests for sharing from the Fellowship are often brought to weekly staff meetings, so that responses reflect either research from A.A. literature or service material or the collective experience of G.S.O. staff and archives. Our weekly staff meetings provide a forum for sharing ideas on how to better serve A.A. groups and members or how to provide the most complete answers to Fellowship inquiries.

G.S.O. staff members serve as secretaries to trustees' and Conference Committees and also are voting members of the General Service Conference. The staff coordinator is secretary to the Conference Policy/Admissions Committee.

During the months of January through August 2016, G.S.O. welcomed a total of 2,520 individuals, including many English- and Spanish-speaking groups ranging in size from 10 to 50. Each visitor had an opportunity to see and hear "how G.S.O. works" and view a display of Grapevine materials during a tour of G.S.O. Often visiting members and guests attend the open A.A. meeting held at G.S.O. at 11:00 a.m. on Fridays. This is an opportunity for the G.S.O. staff to welcome A.A. members from all over the world or from around the corner.

The staff coordinator has the privilege of serving as a director on A.A. World Services, Inc. in accordance with Concept IV, and also serves as liaison between staff members and other G.S.O. departments. None of these activities would be possible without the dedication and skill of a very capable support staff.

*Eva S.*

# G.S.O. Department Reports

**Administration and Staff Services** — *Albin Z., Director:* The director of administration and staff services reports directly to the general manager and is responsible for planning and management of the General Service Office (G.S.O.) staff functions and for providing oversight and functional guidance to the administrative services, all in fulfillment of the mission of the General Service Conference and the boards to support the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous; assigned special projects and committee responsibilities which may arise.

The principal duties and responsibilities of this position are the following:

- Develops, in consultation with the general manager, staff and the appropriate Conference and trustees' committees, the short and long-term plans for each staff function. Coordinates the development and implementation of departments' strategic planning, policies and initiatives necessary to meet the objectives of the G.S.O.
- Ensures plans and programs developed by the staff functions are consistent with the service goals and objectives established by the Conference and the boards.
- Provides direction, guidance and leadership to G.S.O. staff, ensuring sound performance management and evaluation procedures. Assists general manager in selection, hiring and training of staff members.
- Coordinates budgeting and monitors the annual budget for the Services group. Recommends staffing, expenditures and efficient operation. Works with controller to ensure accounting for staff programs and activities is accurate and timely.
- Oversees Administrative Services Department (staff assistants, Support Services, Records, Files and office management). Collaborates with the administrative services manager to provide administrative support to staff services and database management. Ensures staff functions are effectively and efficiently supported.
- Serves on the Leadership Team of the G.S.O. Participates in office operations, policies and procedures decisions. Leads and participates with assigned projects and committees of G.S.O. and A.A.W.S.
- Ensures ongoing support in the coordination of the General Service Board meetings.
- Ensures effective and clear communication of G.S.O. services to the Fellowship, boards and external sources. Communicates the mission of the G.S.O., where appropriate, through participation at Regional Forums, conferences and other Fellowship activities.
- Stays abreast of issues and matters of concern to the general manager in order to provide meaningful advice and consultation on board, Conference, corporate and legal matters. Act effectively for the general manager when and as requested.

**Administrative Services** — *Karen Hale (nonalcoholic), Senior Manager*: The senior manager of administrative services reports directly to the director of administration and services and is responsible for the overall operation of the Records, Files and Support Services Departments, and the staff assistants. This responsibility is carried out through oversight of every aspect of the day-to-day operations of the several departments to ensure that they are operating effectively and efficiently.

The manager of administrative services is also the direct link from G.S.O. to area registrars, advising of Fellowship New Vision (FNV) system changes, as well as providing periodic training in the FNV database and maintenance of the FNV User's Manual.

The Records data-entry personnel handle the daily operations of the department. Their duties include mail distribution and controlling daily workflow. The routine work of the department includes the updating of thousands of records, the processing of new group applications, responding to email/phone inquiries, providing direction on use of FNV and the maintenance of all G.S.O. mailing lists. Their work ensures the accuracy and timely availability of the information required for the various A.A. Directories. The manager of administrative services ensures the information needed to produce the six A.A. Directories has been entered into the database correctly, proofed and is available when the IT Department prepares the Directory files for the Publications Department. The Records Department staff members have served as "Subject Matter Experts" to the Fellowship New Vision project team. The staff will also provide operational support and continued assistance to New Area Record keepers working in the Fellowship system.

The Files Department's main objective is to store and retrieve group records, group correspondence and other material that will eventually form, via the Archives, the pathway to our history. There is a continual search for new and innovative ways to increase the level of productivity, and to fully utilize the department's human resources.

The Records and Files Departments exist to assist the G.S.O. staff and other departments, and to serve the A.A. Fellowship; these departments are available whenever assistance may be needed. The staff assistants and Support Services Department provide their services in a professional and courteous manner. The staff assistants perform a variety of administrative duties in connection with the specific A.A. staff member desk to which each is assigned. In addition to these assignment-specific administrative duties, they provide ongoing assistance to other departments. The fact that many staff assistants and Support Services Department personnel are bilingual provides both the A.A. staff and the Fellowship an additional dimension of service.

The Support Services personnel also provide much-needed support to the office as a whole, in addition to A.A. staff members, the staff assistants and the Archives. The

receptionist/tour guide/lead telephone operator greets visitors and provides information, assists with casual, on-site literature purchases, conducts tours of G.S.O. and answers calls to the switchboard.

The Office Services function handles the day-to-day requirements of office operations that include purchasing office materials, running the copy center, scheduling meeting rooms and services, and tending to the many large groups that visit the office annually.

**Archives** — *Michelle Mirza, Archivist*: The mission of the General Service Office Archives is to permanently document the work of Alcoholics Anonymous, to make the history of the organization accessible to A.A. members and other researchers, and to provide a context for understanding A.A.'s progression, principles and traditions. The Archives staff assumes full ownership of the material under our care. This means that we exercise professional judgment in acquiring, appraising, organizing, preserving, securing and managing the vast array of historical material we manage.

Consistent with A.A.'s primary purpose of maintaining individual sobriety and helping other alcoholics achieve recovery, the Archives of Alcoholics Anonymous will:

- Receive, classify and index all relevant material, such as administrative files and records, correspondence, and literary works and artifacts considered to have historical importance to Alcoholics Anonymous.
- Hold and preserve such material.
- Provide access to these materials, as determined by the Archivist in consultation with the trustees' Archives Committee, to members of Alcoholics Anonymous and to others who may have a valid need to review such material, contingent upon a commitment to preserve the anonymity of our members.
- Serve as a resource and laboratory to stimulate and nourish learning.
- Provide information services to assist the operations of Alcoholics Anonymous.
- Promote knowledge and understanding of the origins, goals and programs of Alcoholics Anonymous.

**Finance and Accounting** — *Robert Slotterback, Director*: The Finance and Accounting Group consists of several units: contributions, cash receipts, bookkeeping, accounts receivable and inventory valuation. The common goal of these finance units is to process information that allows the office to carry on the day-to-day business and recording of transactions that ultimately results in the preparation of monthly, quarterly and annual financial statements. Additional responsibilities of this group traditionally have involved G.S.O. budgeting; meeting planning; assistance with International Convention planning, budgeting, management and reporting; as well as providing information necessary for trusted servants to make appropriate decisions about the General Service Board's Reserve Fund and the A.A.W.S. and A.A. Grapevine Employee's Retirement Plans.

The cash receipts unit's responsibilities include balancing daily cash receipts for literature orders, preparation of bank deposits, recording of accounts receivable payments, collection of outstanding balances and control of credit for accounts receivable. Responsibilities also include sending accounts receivable statements to customers and account research. We continue to encourage purchasers to provide email addresses as we have the ability to email invoices and statements to purchasers. Emailing invoices and statements is an important way to help reduce the cost of operations.

The contributions unit is responsible for processing daily receipts of contributions and making sure we accept contributions only from A.A. members; posting contributions to group accounts, making sure they all are acknowledged; answering inquiries; and doing any research necessary regarding contributions. Statistical reports included in the Conference material are generated for contributions by delegate area, as well as the quarterly statements that are sent to all groups.

During 2016, approximately 82,600 contributions were received in various forms. These include contributions received in the mail and online, both individually entered transactions and recurring contributions. This 82,600 compares with 77,000 received in 2015 and is comparable with 2014 when approximately 83,000 were received. In 2010, we activated an online system for contributions and in 2014 added a feature for recurring contributions.

During 2016, we processed approximately 7,400 online contributions ($564,025), which compares with approximately 4,600 processed in 2015 ($420,000). This shows a growth trend with 4,000 ($379,599) in 2014; 2,980 ($302,230) during 2013; 2,346 ($213,400) during 2012; 1,748 ($156,000) in 2011; and 1,056 in 2010, when the online system first became operational for approximately 6.5 months.

The recurring contribution function appears to be growing in usage. Members can set up an account to automatically charge their credit card either monthly, quarterly or annually. It would seem that this function has been kept a secret because at the end of 2015 there were only 139 members actively using this function. The word is getting out at Regional Forums and other service events. As of February 24, 2017, there were 578 active users.

Several years ago, we implemented an email function for contribution acknowledgments and a group's Quarterly Contribution Statements. We have been sending out approximately 8,000 to 9,000 email acknowledgments for group and individual contributions annually for the past few years.

We have email addresses associated with approximately 30,000 groups for contribution purposes. Approximately 15,500 contributing and 14,600 non-contributing groups have received emails of their quarterly contribution statements.

We continue to hope that the Internet allows us to reduce or mitigate increases in the costs for postage and handling of acknowledgments and statements, with a system that has allowed us to take advantage of a process to identify repetitive contributions from groups or members. This process allows the Contribution Department staff to more quickly process approximately 90% of the

contributions, though some 10% still require research and manual data entry to process, such as bank and postal money orders that some groups and members use to send contributions.

The bookkeeping unit is responsible for maintaining the books of account of A.A. World Services, Inc. and the General Service Board of A.A., Inc., the Reserve Fund and the International Conventions. This unit ensures proper distributions of expenses amongst the corporations. Checks are issued through a vouchers payable system which records the expenses in the appropriate accounts. This unit assists in summarizing income and expense transactions, account analysis, bank accounts reconciliations and preparation of financial reports on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis.

The inventory valuation process ensures that appropriate, generally accepted accounting principles are followed in the valuation of our inventory.

The payroll unit, which is now part of the Human Resources Department, frequently consults with the finance group on various matters as it processes the biweekly payroll. The payroll process, which includes direct deposit or the issuance of payroll checks, is accomplished via Internet-connected data transfers to an outside service bureau.

In addition to the routine work of the Finance group, there traditionally have been additional responsibilities related to assisting with the planning of A.A. International Conventions. Currently there is work ongoing for the next two International Conventions in different stages of planning.

One of our numerous continuing goals for the past few years has been to try to identify additional ways to reduce postage and mailing costs. Digital delivery of various publications (accessible from aa.org) was implemented partly for this purpose. If every group had an email address (and gave us permission) we could conceivably email a wide spectrum of materials, such as letters, memos and various periodicals, thereby saving a significant amount of money in printing and mailing costs.

**Human Resources** — *Olga Mesonjnik (nonalcoholic), Director*: The primary goal of the Human Resources Department is to promote a comprehensive and effective program of human resources management embracing recruitment, compensation and benefits, employee relations, executive and professional development, training, and regulatory and legal compliance. The Human Resources Department supports the ability of G.S.O. to attract, retain, develop, motivate and reward a highly competent and effective workforce.

The Human Resources Department ensures that all aspects of the overall G.S.O. employment program are in conformity with all applicable Federal, state and local laws and regulations. Also, Human Resources ensures effective communication of all policies, programs and procedures to all managerial, professional and non-managerial employees; advises the general manager on industry trends and developments in compensation and employee benefits; and makes revisions to existing plans and policies.

In order to recruit and retain an effective workforce, Human Resources works closely with appropriate senior managerial and supervisory personnel to attract qualified candidates for employment using the most cost-effective means. Orientation programs, training and development are conducted for all employees. In addition to training and development, the Human Resources Department orchestrates recognition, awards and organization-wide events for employees.

**Information Technology Services** — *Cynthia S. Garippa (nonalcoholic), Director*: The primary goal of the Information Technology Services Department is to provide technical and customer service support to the employees of G.S.O. The Information Technology Services Department also provides technical and customer service support to those in the Fellowship who use our database Fellowship New Vision, access our Dashboards or make Seventh Tradition contributions via Contributions Online.

The Information Technology Services Department is responsible for all technology software and hardware from installation to maintenance to training. The department designs, updates and maintains our website, aa.org. The department also ensures that all applications are up to date with the latest versions and all hardware and software are compliant by industry standards, preserving the anonymity of our data with tight security and maintaining a healthy environment with anti-virus and intrusion detection programs.

**Mail/Shipping/Receiving (Literature Fulfillment)** — *Aubrey Pereira (nonalcoholic), Supervisor*: The Mail and Shipping Department is responsible for processing annually over 89,000 pieces of incoming and 69,000 pieces of outgoing mail. This department also ships literature orders from New York and picks and packs orders for visitors or customers who wish to purchase literature here at G.S.O.

Mail/Shipping assembles, wraps and ships more than 40 different complimentary packages, including Conference and D.C.M. Kits and Public Information packages, which are available in English, Spanish and French. This department is responsible for gathering and mailing literature for Regional Forums and health fairs. They complete an average of 255 literature orders per week at our pick-pack operation in New York. They also supply various A.A. General Service Offices throughout the world with literature for distribution to their countries.

Additional responsibilities include the absorption of the A.A. Grapevine's Mail/Shipping Department.

Each person in the department is trained to assemble the various items, such as discount packages, workbooks, etc. Duties also include stocking and replenishing literature supplies and packing material. This requires receiving weekly quantities of literature, which enables us to fill orders that are shipped from this location and/or process orders placed daily by visitors and members/customers who visit this office.

We continue to explore methods to better serve the Fellowship and help carry the A.A. message.

**Publishing** — *David R., Publishing Director*: The overall goals of the Publishing Department remain consistent with those of recent years — to maintain the highest quality

editorial and production standards while implementing economies of best industry-wide practices. Publishing Department divisions are: Editorial, Production, Order Entry, Customer Service, Inventory Control, International Licensing and Translation, Intellectual Property and Permissions, Spanish Translation and Mail and Shipping. The department coordinates all aspects of publishing literature, translating literature, providing permissions for approved excerpts of literature or linking to our website, creating various formats and providing related services, including supplying content for G.S.O.'s website aa.org.

Our managing editor and Spanish editor work closely with each G.S.O. staff member to provide editorial direction and expertise regarding Conference-approved literature, service material or newsletters. Copyediting manuscripts, incorporating board and Conference committee and staff suggestions for changes, rewriting and preparing copy for the printer are the responsibility of these editors. Freelance writers and artists, who are also A.A. members, are hired to develop material and design covers and layouts.

Our production manager works with the production coordinator to ensure optimum manufacturing quality of literature and audiovisual materials at the most competitive prices. Bids are gathered from a variety of vendors and printers are selected who will produce quality products on time and at a reasonable cost. Paper costs, often quite volatile, are monitored and negotiated. The production manager supplies the publishing director with cost information for proposed new A.A.W.S. formats, for Conference projects, and for A.A.W.S. pricing decisions. The production manager works closely with our editors and the Order Entry and Inventory Control divisions in setting up schedules and meeting press dates.

The publishing director works with the Finance Department to determine Publishing Department budget requirements and sales projections. Regular reports are presented by the publishing director to the A.A.W.S. Publishing Committee. In addition, it is the responsibility of the Publishing Department to meet overall publishing goals determined by the General Service Board, A.A. World Services, Inc. and the General Service Conference.

During the past year, the A.A. World Services, Inc. Publishing Department continued its implementation of best-practice publishing-industry standards and procedures with a focus on streamlining processes for cost containment and quality control as well as addressing key initiatives in response to the ever-changing landscape of information access and consumption in the print and digital areas.

Of particular note were these significant activities: a) monitoring and protecting A.A.W.S., Inc. copyrights and trademarks; b) enhancing customer-service efforts throughout the order and fulfillment stream; c) moving forward revisions to items of A.A. Conference-approved literature and service material under Advisory Actions; d) continuing the translation of Conference materials into Spanish and French; e) completing e-book conversions (in English, Spanish and French) and continuing exploration of cutting-edge e-book navigation enhancement technology and trends; f) exploring new and emerging guidelines for "large print" publications; g) contemporizing American Sign Language video editions of the Big Book and *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*; h) developing a new audiobooks strategy focused on current technologies for high-definition recording, streaming and all distribution modes; and i) addressing the surge in queries regarding both Intellectual Property permissions and requests for international translation and licensing of A.A.W.S., Inc. and A.A. Grapevine, Inc. copyrighted material.

*Publishing Department personnel:* The department faced a year of significant transition. The publishing director position was filled with the promotion of David R., who joined A.A.W.S. as licensing manager in 2014 and was most recently serving as publishing and licensing manager. Brittnae Brasfield, a 2015 summer intern with much academic publishing and copyright experience, was hired full-time mid-year as publishing assistant. Inventory manager Malini Singh was promoted to publishing operations manager early in 2016, and has now also assumed responsibility of managing the Order Entry Department upon the retirement of longtime employee Andrea Brennan. Managing editor Eleanor W. also retired, after nearly 35 years. Ames S., longtime A.A.W.S., Inc. freelance writer and project editor, was hired as managing editor in December. Amado Medina (nonalcoholic), longtime freelance typesetter, was hired in the newly created full-time position of digital typesetter-artist.

*Sales:* Total net sales of A.A. literature for 2016 stand at $13,502,905. This is less than budgeted, but greater than 2015 net sales.

In 2016, A.A.W.S., Inc. distributed 854,202 copies of *Alcoholics Anonymous* (Fourth Edition, English) in print form, plus 16,726 as e-books.

*Digital book publishing program:* More than 58,277 ebook units have been sold through our three distributors (Apple, Amazon and Barnes and Noble). All of our English titles have been converted from print with a few illustrated titles in progress to be completed in 2017 in French and Spanish editions. The Big Book and "Twelve and Twelve" are the two most downloaded titles.

*A New Freedom:* The new 30-minute video — filmed inside correctional facilities throughout the U.S. and Canada — was completed in early August 2016 and 559 copies were distributed in 2016.

*Tengo Esperanza:* First produced in 2012 with Spanish-only narration, the video has been dubbed and is now available in English, French and Spanish.

*Holiday Gift Set offer — "A.A. History Shelf":* With the approval of A.A.W.S., Inc., the special-offer Holiday Gift Set was offered via special flyer and through the online stores November 1, 2016 – January 31, 2017. As of end of December 2016, sales totaled 1,171 sets (English: 1,103; French: 26; and Spanish: 42), with $35,130 net sales and 4,684 total individual books distributed.

*AA.org Website:* The Publishing Department works closely with the newly established Communications desk responsible for web services for the Fellowship and with the web manager to address content changes and corrections called for by the G.S.O. Website Committee.

Important updates in content for 2017 include working with independent legal counsel on the clarification of the A.A.W.S., Inc. Content Use Policy, streamlining the permissions process for the access and sharing of PSAs, and clarification of the international Translations and Licensing Policy and Procedures approved by A.A.W.S.

*Customer Satisfaction Survey and Action Plan:* Conducted online February through July 2016, the survey received 389 responses. An analysis of the survey results was shared with the A.A.W.S. Publishing Committee as well as with attendees at the 2016 Intergroup/Central Office A.A. Seminar, with key action steps outlined to address areas receiving unfavorable feedback and to build on the favorables. The department is also taking steps toward addressing specific critiques of the online ordering process and the ease-of-use of the catalog.

*International Translations and Licensing:* A.A.W.S., Inc. holds and manages nearly 1,500 active registered copyrights in trust for the worldwide Fellowship. In 2016, a surge in the volume of international requests was handled and projects moved forward for several different language communities, including: Arabic-speaking, Belgium and French-speaking Europe, China, Czech Republic, Germany, Hong Kong, Iceland, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Mongolia, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand and Ukraine, among many others.

Progress on Grapevine book translation projects and licensing with several countries, including Brazil, Finland, Poland, Russia, and the U.K. has been achieved.

*Intellectual Property and Permissions:* The copyright and trademark for the "Blue People" graphic image has been registered and the following policy formulated by A.A.W.S. regarding the image: *The "Blue People" graphic is a copyrighted design and trademark of A.A.W.S., Inc., with all rights reserved for use exclusively by the A.A.W.S. Board, A.A. Grapevine Board, the General Service Board of U.S./Canada, and the General Service Office of U.S./Canada. (A.A. World Services, Inc., Board of Directors, June 17, 2016)*

**Publishing Operations —** *Malini Singh, Manager*:

*Inventory and Warehousing:* This department monitors inventory on hand at the warehouses and reviews the rates of depletion to project future inventory requirements. The department determines reorder points based on average monthly distribution and advises the production manager when items are up for reordering. The department ensures that inventory is kept at optimal levels at all warehouses and updates and maintains the item-maintenance file on Traverse. New items are issued and set up as needed. Inventory sets up safety stock for each item and reviews the safety-stock alert report daily. This department peruses the goods-received reports from the warehouses and resolves inconsistencies, posting all receipts and transfers to and from all distribution points. Inventory also reviews warehouse activity reports monthly and reconciles significant variances.

The Inventory Department is responsible for researching and negotiating with freight companies to guarantee that A.A.W.S. is getting the most competitive pricing and to secure new freight vendors as needed. Another function of this department is to audit the freight invoices to ensure that shipments are charged at the correct rates and that truckers' discounts are properly applied. The department assigns freight carriers for all shipments from the printers/manufacturers to the distribution points; reviews and processes invoices received from the printer/manufacturer; and updates the production log when goods and invoices are received. The Inventory Department reviews the warehousing invoices and investigates discrepancies.

*Customer Service:* This unit manages and troubleshoots all customer-related issues that arise in the order fulfillment process. They handle and control all warehousing, shipping and literature delivery issues to ensure smooth operations and timeliness. The Customer Service Department also troubleshoots all issues relating to the online stores and the online ordering process.

*Order Entry:* This unit is responsible for processing and posting all orders and balancing daily, monthly and yearly sales reports. The Order Entry Department processes orders received each day from the United States, Canada and overseas. The orders are received by mail, phone, fax, email and online. Orders processed through our warehousing facilities represent about 95% of the total dollar value of literature sales. Overseas orders are processed from the Canadian warehouse.

Cash deposits are made daily by the Accounting Department and the orders are then entered on the computer by Order Entry. After the orders are posted, we generate numerous reports including a daily sales report, invoices for charge and credit card orders, pick-pack slips for the Shipping Department and daily warehouse shipment reports for the Inventory Department. Orders being sent from our warehouses are emailed to them for shipment.

This department is also responsible for taking all phone orders. In 2016, 4,488 calls were taken, including credit card orders. The department gives price quotes and provides callers with general information regarding the ordering of literature. In 2016, 24,607 paid literature orders were processed. Credit card orders totaled 18,681, almost 76% of all paid orders and almost 81% of all telephone orders.

The department also processes all complimentary literature initiated by staff, which includes New Group, New G.S.R. and other complimentary literature. Last year, more than 20,000 complimentary orders were processed. In 2016, we had 3,432 orders placed online by intergroup/central offices and area and district committees. We currently have more than 600 customers signed up to use the bulk-order online bookstore. The consumer online bookstore for the public had 12,499 orders. Web sales made up 62% of total sales.

# Area Service Highlights — Panel 67 Delegates

## (Only first-term delegates give Area Highlights)

**Alabama/N.W. Florida:** Area 1 covers the entire state of Alabama and the panhandle of Florida. We have 471 groups and 24 districts, including a Spanish-speaking district (comprised of nine Spanish groups). Our area assembly meets quarterly in Auburn, including a pre-Conference assembly in March or April. Throughout our weekend-long assemblies we have workshops, committee meetings, and Ask-it-Basket meeting (answered by a panel of past delegates) and A.A. meetings (which we call Night Owl meetings on Friday and Saturday evening). There is a business meeting on Sunday morning. We have a hospitality room that provides coffee/drinks and snacks during the assembly (Area 1 provides seed money for restocking supplies when needed and we have a can to insert self-support money). All of our workshops, committees and area service meetings are closed meetings. All of our area service committees are actively carrying the A.A. message to the still-suffering alcoholic, as well as cooperating with those who may be in contact with alcoholics. We are having an Area 1 Convention September 15-17, 2017 hosted by districts 13 and 14. This will be held at the Emerald Coast Convention Center on Okaloosa Island in Fort Walton Beach. Area 1 and Area 16 (Georgia) are co-hosting the 4th Southern States Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly (SSAASA) November 10-12, 2017. — *Linda W.*

**Arkansas:** Area 4 covers 53,179 square miles, with a population of 2,915,918 people. The area is mostly rural, composed of 4,833 members in 263 groups, forming 13 districts, District 13 being our linguistic district, which covers the entire state with 14 registered groups. District 13 provides translations for Spanish members during our assemblies and state convention. Area assemblies are two-day events, held once a quarter in a fixed central location. We have orientation for G.S.R.s, workshops, a speaker meeting, Ask-It-Basket and a business meeting on Sunday. We have 10 permanent committees that meet and report at each assembly. Committees consist of past delegates, area officers, D.C.M.s, G.S.R.s and committee chairs who are appointed by the area chair and co-chair. Committees present workshops and assist district committees in their functions. Past delegates, area officers, D.C.M.s and G.S.R.s are voting members of the assembly. Districts hold service meetings quarterly in between our assemblies. Area 4 has one active central office and three intergroups serving our Fellowship and their communities. Area 4 was honored to host the 2016 South West Regional A.A. Service Assembly. — *Tom F.*

**British Columbia/Yukon:** Area 79 includes the Yukon Territory, most of British Columbia and one small section of Washington. It's the second largest area. We have districts that equal the size of Mississippi and Maryland combined. From the southern tip of BC to the northern tip of the Yukon is 2,540 km or 1,587 miles. Travel outside cities can find you navigating rocky mountains, winding rivers and beautiful lakes. Many districts and groups are only accessible by ferry, small plane, boat or even snowmobile. Therefore, we have a very active remote communities standing committee. It has put together our own Remote Communities Kit and Workbook. Its mission statement in part is: "to assist those who are unable to make it to regular face-to-face meetings on a consistent basis. Members who may be faced with travel or geographic challenges or may face barriers such as language, cultural considerations and/or anything else that could separate a person who needs… our lifesaving program." Another standing committee is website. It oversees our web team of volunteers. They keep our events and meeting lists current as well as securing a password-protected site that helps to house and distribute our Conference background material. Our third area specific standing committee is our newsletter, *Grassroots*. It contains all reports and minutes from our four quarterlies and assemblies each year. Districts bid to host these events all over our vast area. A.A. in Area 79 is represented by more than 821 groups in 48 districts. Our area committee ideally has 48 D.C.M.s and 14 officers known as our General Service Committee. There are nine more standing committees that mirror the General Service Conference. — *Jade F.-H.*

**California (Central):** Area 93 covers approximately 16,600 square miles in five counties, including parts of Los Angeles County. We have eight area committee meetings and nine assemblies per panel, including a two-day assembly/election at the end of each panel. We also hold two pre-Conference workshops hosted by the districts. We have a total of 25 districts; 23 are active and seven are Spanish-linguistic districts. Our area has a total of 1,663 groups listed with G.S.O. We have a total of 11 standing committees and five subcommittees; the newest subcommittee is SIS or "Seniors In Sobriety." Our committees are very active year 'round. The treatment facilities committee has been busy in creating a database of volunteers for the Bridging the Gap program. Our archives committee helps to organize our annual oldtimers event, organize a gratitude day and run workshops about the history of A.A. Our literature committee works with Grapevine and La Viña committees to organize an annual area workshop. Grapevine and La Viña committees also organize writing workshops that rotate throughout the districts. Spanish-speaking membership has increased along with participation at district and area levels. Area 93 will be hosting the 21st Anniversary of La Viña in the Pacific Region this year. The organizing host committee is working along with our area's La Viña committee to plan this event. Our area committee shares about services provided by G.S.O. to the Fellowship during assemblies and district visits to help carry our A.A. message to the still-suffering alcoholic and the general public. We've been emphasizing the importance of self-support and on how Seventh Tradition contributions help our General Service Office do that. — *Melvin M.*

**California (Northern Coastal):** Area 6 is a sliver of the California coast that runs from the Oregon border down to Monterey County. We have approximately 59,660 members and 2,051 groups. We have 23 districts, 18 of which are English-speaking. Most of these are about the size of the county they are in with exception of a few which have grown in population and split. We have five Spanish-linguistic districts that overlay the entire area and fully participate in all our activities due to the hard work of our Interpretation and Translation Committee. We use a sub-district structure, so in addition to our 23 D.C.M.C.s, we have the potential for 151 D.C.M.s. Our area committee meets monthly at a central location and our districts bid to host four assemblies per year. Before our area committee meeting we have many sharing sessions and subcommittee meetings. The newest one is an Accessibility Sharing Session, which started this year. Area 6 will be the hospitality area for the 2018 Pacific Regional Forum, which will be held in San Jose, September 7-9, 2018. — *Joann L.*

**California (Southern):** Area 5 encompasses the Greater Los Angeles area, reflecting the richness of our diversity and strength of our Fellowship's unity. Covering less than 1,800 square miles, Area 5 is one of the smallest areas geographically but one of the most densely populated, serving 1,400 A.A. groups and 46,000 members. We don't all share the same culture, heritage or language, but we are united in our common effort and share a common solution that keeps each of us alive. Our 33 districts feature a range of structures: "stand-alone" districts, two "combined districts" and 5 "overlay" stand-alone Spanish-language districts covering the entire area and cooperating through an Interdistrict Committee. Our area communications, quarterly newsletter and website are published in English and Spanish and live translation is provided at all area meetings and events. Area 5 holds quarterly steering committee meetings, area committee meetings and area assemblies. We participate each year in a four-area D.C.M. sharing session, organize a Spanish-Language Service Forum and hold a two-day pre-Conference workshop featuring Conference agenda presentations, roundtable discussions and report-backs. Through our year-round process, Area 5 adds its collective voice and suggestions for improving A.A. literature, policy or finances by making proposals for consideration by the Conference. In November, Area 5 will host a Local Forum. G.S.R.s participate in our area's 15 service committees. All these endeavors support the constantly active worldwide services that benefit our groups and help carry the message of A.A. — *Thomas B.*

**Colorado:** With around 20,000 A.A. members, Area 10 encompasses the state of Colorado. Currently our area is comprised of 799 groups (33 of which are Spanish-speaking) in 30 geographic districts and 2 linguistic districts. Each year we hold three area assemblies (in March, July and November), a corrections conference and a state convention. The 2017 State Convention will be September 1-3 at the Embassy Suites in Loveland. In 2016, we celebrated 75 years of A.A. in Colorado, for which our area archives committee put together a commemorative video. We also approved an upgrade to our area website — a project that was several years in the making for our web committee. Historically districts have bid to host assemblies, but as participation in area service has grown, the number of facilities that can accommodate our large gatherings has declined. So, we have begun a three-year trial period of holding our spring assemblies in a fixed location. An enduring challenge is encouraging participation among inactive groups and districts. Many of our D.C.M.s hold G.S.R. orientations and sharing sessions about how to effectively communicate information back to their groups while increasing enthusiasm about A.A. service. Sponsorship into service is emphasized. We often pair the delegate's Conference reports with introductory talks about the general service structure. Overall, interest in general service is alive and well in Area 10 with many Concepts and Traditions studies ongoing in districts and groups. — *Erica C.*

**Connecticut:** With 250-miles of shoreline on Long Island Sound and many inland lakes, Connecticut's reputation as a resort area offers a variety of opportunities for the 32,420 resident A.A.s to practice the principal aim and main reason for the existence of the 1,444 groups, which is to carry the message. Divided into nine geographic districts and one linguistic district, there are 10 active service committees. Our answering service, P.I. and C.P.C. committees cooperate to find new and innovative ways of carrying the message, including short PSAs at Department of Motor Vehicle offices to heighten awareness of our presence in the state. As members of one of the most active committees, archives members search for ways to preserve the precious heritage of A.A. in Area 11. The website and schedules committees cooperate to ensure that accurate and current information is available when needed; our website gets most of its hits from mobile devices. The enthusiastic leadership of both the corrections and treatment committees and the newly renamed accessibilities committee inspires the members who provide valuable outreach and support to vulnerable populations in our area. Grapevine, always a popular committee, with its colorful displays and literature for sale, hosts the annual Grape Jam. We also practice Rule 62, fellowshipping at the five area events held throughout the year, including two conventions, a family camping weekend, a bilingual service event and our roundup, not to mention the service events hosted by the districts. In 2018, Area 11 will host the Northeast Regional A.A. Service Assembly. — *Peggy M.*

**District of Columbia:** Area 13 may be small in size but it is densely populated, with one of the largest concentrations of A.A. meetings and groups in the nation. Our membership "capitalizes" on more than 2,000 meetings available per week — you don't have to go far to find some sobriety, a benefit realized by the countless travelers who pass through our metropolitan area. Many members of Area 13 want our Fellowship to be known for the diversity of our area; how we love attending the anniversary meetings in our three Spanish-language districts, not only

because of the amazing food but also to listen to a spiritual message that transcends language. Our members also talk about the pride they feel for groups like Cosmopolitan, which was the first African-American A.A. group founded more than 71 years ago by Dr. Jim S., the writer of "Jim's Story" in the Big Book. Additionally, they appreciate the uniqueness of groups, how on a Tuesday morning at 7:45 a.m. you can head to a closed A.A. meeting in the U.S. Capitol building for the aptly named "Yeas and Nays" Group and then join the group for breakfast in the Congressional Dining Hall. Area 13 members asked that I highlight their commitment to service, understanding that our message of hope can be carried through coffeemakers, as well as our commitment to the Grapevine program providing subscriptions for prisoners. They spoke of our ability to cram an entire discussion on Conference agenda items into a six-hour "mini-conference." They noted our recent redistricting and the new D.C.M.s who are rallying G.S.R.s to be more active in service. And they asked that I announce that our Maryland-based Spanish-language district will be hosting the 45th U.S. and Canada Hispanic Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous over Labor Day weekend in Baltimore, with an expected attendance of more than 6,000 A.A. members from around the world. — *Jason R.*

**Florida (North):** Area 14 has nearly 1,100 groups in 30 districts within 35 counties over about 29,000 square miles. The area spans from the Gulf of Mexico to the Atlantic Ocean, Jacksonville to Palm Bay, west just beyond Tallahassee on the Panhandle and also includes Orlando. This gives us many miles to cover bringing pre-Conference workshops to our districts. Our area's tradition of going on the road with proposed agenda items brings greater knowledge and understanding to the membership in preparation for a well-informed group conscience on agenda items in April. We have four assemblies a year with concentration on education and training by our 11 service committees. Our informative website is very active, with 10,000 visits per month by almost 8,000 unique visitors. Close to half of the most-visited pages were Spanish. We are pleased to be servicing our area-wide Hispanic district in this way. We are also working to revitalize under-represented districts and are making progress. Our area is the founding place of a grassroots self-support movement called "Me Plus One," which encourages contributing for oneself and for another who cannot afford it. Today, smartphones, email and the Internet top the list of preferred communication methods and we are attempting to use every means of communications possible within our Traditions to reach the still sick and suffering! — *Joyce C.*

**Florida (South Florida/Bahamas /Virgin Islands/Antigua/St. Maarten/Cayman Islands):** Area 15 is comprised of 19 districts, two of which are Spanish linguistic. We currently serve 2,313 groups located throughout South Florida and the Caribbean Islands. Our area assembly meets quarterly and rotates around South Florida where districts host the weekend event. Our 15 standing committees meet to share ideas, goals and challenges. At our Concepts, Traditions and Service Manual workshops we invite our past delegates to share their experience, strength and hope. We also have G.S.R. and D.C.M. sharing sessions and a speaker meeting Friday and Saturday nights. Our Spanish Linguistic Committee translates our minutes into Spanish and our website committee posts tons of information for the recovering alcoholic, as well as links to many intergroup websites. We interpret our business meeting in Spanish and, when requested, provide American Sign Language (ASL) translation at various meetings. Having groups and districts in remote areas, our Remote Communities Committee reaches out via Skype and email to help carry the message. We recently completed our first area-wide inventory. The Florida State Convention, which rotates between Area 14 and Area 15, is an exciting event with workshops, presentations, sporting events and wonderful speakers from around the country. — *Annie C.*

**Hawaii:** From the first recorded meetings held in Hawai'i Nei in 1943 to the 320 reported active groups spread across our main islands of Kaua'i, O'ahu, Moloka'i, Lana'i, Maui, and Hawai'i island, the fellowship of A.A. has blossomed to include all of our ethnically diverse population in 14 service districts. We strengthen unity throughout Area 17 by doing our best to visit each district during every panel, drawing locations for our assemblies from the hat, generally three in odd years, four in even, and committee meetings held in between. Groups in Hawaii sacrifice much to ensure their voice is heard, as air travel is our only viable option and we do have excellent area participation. Our G.S.R.s work hard to let groups and members on their respective islands know how important it is to keep the doors open for alcoholics who haven't met us yet. Recent area work included major changes in our area corrections committee structure affecting a closer relationship between those carrying the message into facilities and the resources of our assembly. Further, to improve internal communications, our area webmaster and committee migrated our email system, eliminating a huge spam problem and providing new tools we hope to take full advantage of going forward. Capping 2016, Area 17 was privileged to host the Pacific Regional Forum, where 449 attendees, 70% of them first-timers, were treated to the beauty of our Kona coast, towering volcanoes, island-style hospitality and the message of hope and recovery that is Alcoholics Anonymous. — *Bob H.*

**Illinois (Chicago):** Area 19 includes all of Cook County, and not the just the Chicago area. We have 21 districts, 3,900 registered meetings and more than 38,000 members. Most districts meet locally once a month, with some meeting every other month. Representatives from the 21 districts come together for our service assembly, which serves as a business meeting for Area 19 and is held six times a year. Each assembly is hosted by a district and the hosting districts are chosen through a matrix. Our trial-and-error experience helps us to organize the assembly in such a way that each district gets a chance to host an assembly, with the location rotating throughout the area. Area 19 is a service-oriented area; we have 13 service

committees that meet once a month at a service office located in downtown Chicago. These committees give our members opportunities to do a wide variety of Twelfth Step work and provide a report at each assembly on their activities. They also host numerous workshops throughout the year, carrying the message of A.A. and reaching out to the newcomer — the most important person in this great Fellowship. Area 19 will be hosting the Illinois State Conference this year August 11-13. This conference rotates among the three areas in Illinois. — *Leon H.*

**Illinois (Southern):** Area 21 consists of approximately 470 registered groups in the southern two-thirds of Illinois. We have 17 districts and at least one Spanish-speaking group. Our area service committees all have a chairperson. Our quarterly area assemblies are held on a Sunday and rotate on a bidding basis. This year we had our first pre-Conference Workshop to give the area delegate the conscience of the area on the Conference agenda. We are very much looking forward to hosting the East Central Regional Forum in Springfield this November. The area hosts an annual Corrections Conference with participation from Areas 19 and 20. Our area has most of the State's prisons plus some Federal facilities where we carry the message of recovery. We receive greatly appreciated assistance from Areas 19 and 20 in the way of books, literature and expertise in our corrections work. There is a well-attended Big Book Conference every year in Springfield. All area functions are self-supporting, well attended, and have produced notable interest in service work, the Concepts, Traditions, and A.A. as a whole. We do have very similar challenges as other primarily rural areas. In the last two years, we went over 50% of our group's G.S.R.s and contacts having email addresses. We are attempting to reach as many still-suffering alcoholics as we can, crossing all demographic, educational, financial and societal barriers. — *Patrick W.*

**Indiana (Northern):** Area 22 has 48 districts with more than 680 groups listed with G.S.O., 11 of which are Spanish-language groups. Our assembly meets four times in odd numbered years and five times in even numbered years, the additional assembly being an October election assembly. Annually we conduct two D.C.M. conferences. In March, we help prepare the delegate for the General Service Conference with our area committee's review of Conference agenda items and subsequent group conscience. The second D.C.M. conference is devoted to addressing the needs, qualities and responsibilities of the D.C.M.s. Our area website provides information about Area 22 activities and a process for contacting any of the nine standing committees that comprise our service structure. The website provides direct access to group meeting schedules and to local Intergroup/Central Office and district websites. In 2017, we will be updating our area service handbook. On July 14-16, Area 22 will be hosting the 64th State Convention and East Central Regional Conference in Fort Wayne. — *Bruce C.*

**Iowa:** After what is believed to be the first meeting held in Iowa in 1943, Area 24 now serves more than 14,000 alcoholics. We are in the very southeast corner of the West Central Region, with more than 650 active groups that comprise 22 districts and one Spanish-language district. At our voting conference held in October 2016, 20 of the 23 districts had D.C.M.s in attendance. There were also G.S.R.s from every district present. We are a predominately rural state; our largest metro area, Des Moines, is under 500,000 people, and carrying the message might be simply a trip across town or a 15- to 30-mile drive to the next town over. We hold five business meetings a year. Three of them are held in Marshalltown, which is the geographic center of the state. At the January meeting we typically hold workshops about service responsibilities in odd numbered years, and Concepts or Traditions workshops on even years. We go over the agenda items to appear before the General Service Conference at our March meeting. Our delegate and alternate delegate as well as four (rotating) area officers and service chairs attend the West Central A.A. Service Conference, where we continue to review and discuss the items to appear before Conference. The August meeting is a one-day event attended by the area officers, chairs and D.C.M.s. The remaining two meetings are held in cities across the state and are bid and voted on by the entire area assembly. In addition to the actual business meeting we have workshops, speakers, dinners and dances at these two events. Al-Anon is our invited guest at these two assemblies, where they conduct their own business meeting. — *Rick W.*

**Louisiana:** Area assemblies in Area 27 average 100 to 150 members. At our January assembly, we had 23 new G.S.R.s in attendance for the first time and 10 new D.C.M.s. Our area service committee chairs were sworn in at the January assembly. Area service board elections were held in November, due to cancelling of our August assembly because of the Great Flood of 2016 in Baton Rouge. Our state convention was also cancelled due to the flood. Our state convention committee decided to take the 2016 conference T-shirts that we couldn't use and mark out 2016 and replace it with 2017. They also decided to put some new artwork on the back of the T-shirts in commemoration of the conference that we never had! For 2017 and 2018, our area assembly has been moved from Baton Rouge to Lafayette. Our P.I. and C.P.C. committees are working together to man an information booth at two separate large conferences in New Orleans this year, with the help of G.S.O. — *Moe M.*

**Massachusetts (Eastern):** Spanning from Cape Ann in the north to Cape Cod in the south and extending westward from the Atlantic Ocean out along the Mohawk Trail, Area 30 is home to 1,650 groups that put on 2,200 weekly meetings, serving approximately 50,000 alcoholics. Our area committee meets monthly and each year we gather as an area assembly for five one-day sessions hosted by our districts on a voluntary and rotating basis. We are organized into 26 geographic districts and one Spanish-language district. This year, our Spanish district marked its

15th anniversary and hosted an area assembly for the first time. Our service committees meet monthly in order to better coordinate our Twelfth Step work. On an ongoing basis, our members outreach high schools, colleges and nursing programs; carry meetings behind the walls and into treatment centers and senior care facilities; archive the history of our groups; provide literature to libraries and police stations; and encourage subscriptions to the Grapevine. We also recently completed the translation of our area website into Spanish and are working to ensure that our meetings are accessible to all alcoholics. Over New Year's weekend in Boston, members of our YPAA community hosted the New England Conference of Young People in A.A., and Area 30 is grateful for the opportunity to host this year's Northeast Regional A.A. Service Assembly. Additionally, we look forward to once again partnering with our neighbors in Area 31 to host the Massachusetts State Convention in November. — *Sue W.*

**Michigan (Central):** Area 32 serves the central portion of the state of Michigan, from the northern tip to the Ohio border. There are 14 districts, all of which are actively involved with the business of the area. More than 700 groups carry the message of recovery. Our area assembly meets six times yearly with 11 committees supporting corrections, Grapevine and more, all reporting to the assembly. A D.C.M. meeting is led by the standing delegate and a G.S.R. meeting, for training and sharing, is conducted by the current alternate delegate. Each year in March we conduct a statewide mock-Conference to help the three area delegates prepare for the Conference. Michigan has five areas, three of which meet quarterly as the Statewide General Service Committee to help plan and fund the Michigan State Convention and the mock-Conference. Statewide general service also picks a candidate to stand for the various trustee positions as they become open. Our area has formed a YPAA Committee, which has been a great asset. Currently, an area inventory with possible agenda changes and a rotating service structure workshop are in the works. Several past delegates are involved and attend assemblies, making their experience available to all who seek. — *Ted S.*

**Michigan (Southeast):** Area 33 covers five counties in Southeastern Michigan, including the Detroit metropolitan area, smaller towns, villages and communities many points north of the city, with more than 850 registered groups in 25 districts. One district is dedicated to our recovering Spanish-speaking members and is an active district within the city of Detroit. While Detroit A.A. history dates back to A.A.'s pioneering times, over the decades, the city has changed. Many of the districts have no participation in area service. So, Area 33 initiated a bold effort to reinvigorate those districts. We named it "The Detroit Event" and had neighboring districts "adopt" or "sponsor" inactive ones. The thrust was to bring about greater A.A. service to the alcoholic community and encourage excitement and participation for the upcoming International Convention in 2020. The event was successful, and more than 100 members from dark districts participated. Our annual roundup in March also continues to break attendance records, each year more well-attended than the previous one. The monthly assemblies are generally home to a motley crew of colorful personalities, each with sundry ideas and ambitions. This past year, we created an ad hoc agenda committee to study the area's current agenda and make recommendations of ways we might improve G.S.R. communication and involvement during the assemblies. In the end, we work through our challenges and disagreements, demonstrating patience and understanding as best we can. Regular sharing sessions and open microphones, we have discovered, prove to be most effective and beneficial to our group conscience. — *Carlyle W.*

**Minnesota (Southern):** In Area 36 our trusted servants range from general service lifers to a growing group of enthusiastic newbies who are our hope and future. It is our duty to be enthusiastic examples of general service to encourage our newest members to join us in this vital work, and each rotation, we hold area-wide service events and trusted servant trainings to pass along the principles and practices of general service to the next generation of A.A. leaders. Our area works hard to connect potential members of A.A. to meetings and fellow alcoholics. We have well-established temporary contact programs for those seeking A.A. from correctional and treatment facilities, working closely with our A.A. neighbors to the north, Area 35. We hold a joint Area 35/36 workshop each year to foster communication about temporary contact programs, meeting locator websites and apps, and public information at statewide events such as the Minnesota State Fair — all of which are activities that cross our Area boundaries. Groups in Area 36 are reaching out to more demographically diverse populations within the Fellowship. As an example, meetings have begun that specifically welcome members of the growing Somali immigrant community. These groups face challenges of reputation and taboo based in a culture where alcohol use of any kind is forbidden, yet alcoholism certainly exists. Groups are also witnessing growing participation by members of the Deaf community. The Twin Cities now have an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreted meeting every day of the week. As with all alcoholics, our Deaf friends are naturally drawn and compelled to participate in general service. As they seek to serve at the group, district and area levels, new challenges emerge concerning the availability and cost of interpreter services. In our area, districts are leading the way in pooling resources to provide for interpreters at area-wide service events. — *Curt K.*

**Missouri (Eastern):** Area 38 covers 32,000 square miles of Missouri, in its eastern half. Our area serves about 607 registered groups with approximately 9,700 members. With a recent redistricting that turned what were three metropolitan districts into four, we now have 24 geographical districts. We also have one Spanish-speaking linguistic district, which is statewide, extending into Area 39 in the western half of the state. We hold four one-day assemblies a year, one for every season. Traditionally, in even years our fall assembly spans two days to accommodate our

elections. Presently, our assemblies are held at a conference center located in the suburbs of St. Louis. Very recently, we added a Technology Committee to our list of standing committees, bringing the total to ten. That committee is already busy discussing technological changes to our website to improve its utility to other committees and districts, and how it can facilitate how we communicate we each other. All of Area 38's standing committees continue to be very active, and past and current members of our Corrections Committee have been working hard with G.S.O. staff and an advisory committee on the First Annual National Corrections Conference, which will be held on November 10-12, 2017, in St. Louis. We look forward to this event, as it will facilitate sharing and discussion about carrying the message behind the walls by members involved in corrections service work around the country. — *Ian S.*

**Missouri (Western):** Area 39 covers approximately 35,000 square miles with 230 groups, 17 districts and two central offices, one in Kansas City and one in Springfield. We hold four two-day assemblies a year: January, March, June and September in Sedalia. At these assemblies, Saturday is comprised of D.C.M., G.S.R. and committee meetings. Saturday evening a workshop is conducted and officer reports given. Committee reports are given on Sunday, followed by old and new business. In May, the area hosts an Institutions Forum, rotating between districts. We invite professionals who correspond with the area standing committees to participate on panels with our A.A. members to discuss how to better carry the message. Also in May in alternating years the Grapevine Committee hosts The Many Faces of Grapevine workshop. Area 39 co-hosts the Missouri State Convention with Area 38 in July in Jefferson City. In October, we hold our Western Area of Missouri Convention in Branson. In October 2018, we will be hosting the Southwest Regional A.A. Service Assembly, which will also be held in Branson. — *Marjorie H.*

**Montana:** The Area 40 Archives tell us that 2017 marks 75 years since the first official A.A. contact from Montana. A fellow named Jimmy C. moved from Atlanta, GA, and wrote a letter to "headquarters" boasting that we would one day have a fine group here. Jimmy C. had no way of knowing how right he was. Today, Eureka, in the northwest corner, is surrounded by sky-touching mountains and Ekalaka, in the southeast corner, sits on open plains that extend beyond the horizon. A road trip between them is 742 miles and takes more than 12 hours. Lewistown is the geographical center of Montana and has been for many years the spiritual center of general service work in Area 40. We have gathered there twice a year for nearly 40 years for our area assemblies. This fall, we're moving our assembly, in part, to better accommodate those with accessibility issues. We feel strongly that we need to have a place that is as broad, roomy and all-inclusive as our Fellowship. Our large geographical area, along with Montana's high rates of DUI and alcohol-related deaths, presents a Twelfth Step challenge that requires the members of our 282 groups, 14 districts and eight standing committee chairs to extend the hand of A.A. far, wide and often to reach the still-suffering alcoholics among us. — *Gerry R.*

**Nevada:** Area 42 consists of all of Nevada and a section of California on the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada mountain range. There are two main centers of population in Nevada: the Reno-Sparks and Carson City area in the north and Las Vegas in the south. Area 42 is the only area in the A.A. delegate structure that has been divided into two general service parts: the Southern Area General Service Committee and the Northern Area General Service Committee. Each of these committees meet four times a year, and Area 42 meets as a whole two times a year for our area assembly, held in the historic silver mining town of Tonopah. Tonopah lies halfway between Reno and Las Vegas and about the same distance from Elko, which is on the eastern side of Nevada. There are about 1,100 groups in our area, of which 548 are listed as active, in 20 active districts of which two are linguistic. Our sub areas both have complete service committee structures which are doing work with the prisons, treatment centers, professionals and helping districts and groups start service committees of their own which then carry the message of hope to the still suffering alcoholics everywhere in the state. — *Phil W.*

**New Jersey (Northern):** Area 44 covers all of northern New Jersey with 42 districts, nearly 1,400 groups and 33,000 members. We have two very active Spanish-speaking districts supported by a hardworking translation committee. We have seven standing and 13 special committees, seven of which are jointly chaired and supported by Northern NJ Intergroup. Annually we hold six area committee meetings, monthly officers' meetings, quarterly Joint Unity Meetings with Intergroup, a G.S.R. mid-winter luncheon, convention and service workshops. We have a quarterly newsletter, a busy website and an exciting archive collection representing our area's rich A.A. history. Our archives committee just completed a reel-to-reel digitization project which converted 100-plus reels into approximately 400 listening hours of speakers from the '50s, '60s and '70s. We hope to have some of this available on our Area 44 website soon. We foster group participation through extensive interaction with our G.S.R.s. Each year we have four G.S.R. assemblies, one of which is a mini-Conference designed to engage our groups in the Conference process. Area 44's delegate and alternate meet with our past delegates to choose items from the full Conference agenda for discussion and debate in our groups and at our mini-Conference. Our delegate, alternate, area chair and treasurer present the background for our selected mini-Conference items, in eight pre-Conference reports throughout the area. Our G.S.R.s bring this information back to their groups and then carry their group's conscience to our Mini-Conference Assembly where they participate in an area "Conference experience" that includes presentations, roundtable discussion, debate, recommendations and voting. After our delegate returns from the Conference, our team hits the road again to deliv-

er eight post-Conference reports, presenting the results of the entire Conference agenda. — *Lester G.*

**New York (Central):** Area 47 has 650 registered active groups, including 14 in Pennsylvania and 27 in correctional facilities. Our largest metropolitan areas are Rochester, Syracuse and Binghamton. We have area assemblies each month, except for May, when a weekend service convention is held that includes the delegates report-back on the conference. The March and April assemblies are tasked with reviewing the Conference agenda items and arriving at an informed area conscience. The assemblies are held at different locations and the maximum drive time to one could be as much as three hours. The average number of voting members present at assemblies over the last six years has remained stable at 60. However, many more attend the delegate's report-back and the area convention. Increasing general service participation and retention is a standing goal in the districts and assembly. Group contributions to the area have increased by nearly 10% in the last five years. Nearly 65% of the monthly area minutes are now distributed by email, resulting in significant savings in printing and mailing cost. The website committee extensively revised its operational manual so that an incoming committee chairperson or other trusted servant can now maintain the website with a minimal amount of pre-training. The Treatment Committee established the enlistment of temporary contacts, on the website, for the service program Bridging the Gap between treatment and A.A. Also, we are preserving our past as the Archives Committee continues to digitize, in a word-searchable format, numerous past years of area assembly meeting minutes. This August it will be our turn in the rotation to host the 38th annual New York State Informational Workshop. At this low-cost weekend event the service committee chairs from all four New York areas present at panels to share our experiences on the most effective ways of doing our Twelfth Step work. A G.S.O. staff member joins us and is the speaker at the Saturday evening meeting. The dress code is sandals and shorts. — *Joseph S.*

**New York (Southeast):** Area 49 is made up of the 12 geographic counties of southeastern New York, stretching from Montauk to Monticello, plus a very active non-geographic Hispanic district comprised of all the Hispanic groups registered within. Rich in A.A. history, we are home to Bill's bottom, the General Service Office and Stepping Stones. SENY is unique in that we have a county service structure as well as districts. We are a diverse area with approximately 1,800 groups and meetings in English, Spanish, Russian, Polish and Korean. We hold five full-day assemblies per year. In addition, we hold a Delegate's Day of Sharing each March which includes presentations on Conference agenda items and the opportunity for G.S.R.s to ask questions that will help them better inform their groups on items that may come up at the Conference. Our area newsletter, *The Link,* is published ten times per year along with its Hispanic counterpart, *En Lace.* Our translation committee translates from English to Spanish at area events and our minutes and agendas are translated into Spanish, as well. We work closely with our three young people's committees seeking their participation in our Twelfth Step efforts. Many of their members have become involved at the area level in recent years. We continue to seek ways to increase attendance at our area assemblies and committee meetings and have seen an uptick in participation as a result of these efforts. — *John W.*

**North Carolina:** In Area 51, the area committee meets four times a year and we hold two assemblies. We have 36 geographic districts plus three linguistic districts. We have more than 1,000 groups in both Spanish and English, and area business is conducted bilingually. We have active service coordinators and hold three service events: a corrections conference, "Freedom from Bondage," held every spring; and two state conventions that occur every year, one of which will be 70 years old this summer and the other, held after Thanksgiving, which is now in year 11 and is conducted in Spanish. — *Kenneth C.*

**North Dakota:** Area 52 consists of 175 groups in nine districts with approximately 3,300 members. We hold three area assemblies a year, and part of the March assembly weekend is devoted to General Service Conference Agenda items. Our area is blessed with past delegate's involvement at area service assemblies. The area, led by the most recent past delegate and assisted by the area committee chairs, hosts two G.S.R./P.I.-C.P.C. schools each year in February in towns not usually able to host larger service assemblies, one in the east and one in the western part of the state, to acquaint newly elected G.S.R.s to the service structure of A.A. using *The A.A. Service Manual* and Area 52 service handbook and to encourage group participation in district and area service. Area 52 has very active groups and districts, hosting fellowship events, picnics, dances and roundups. Fargo/Moorhead has recently begun an intergroup service, and will be hosting a two-day First Annual A.A. Symposium, which will provide a comprehensive view of A.A. for the professional, public and A.A. members, including sharing from the G.S.O. general manager, as well as providing information about how to get involved with P.I./C.P.C. and Institutions work to carry the message to the still-suffering alcoholic. Area 52 recently hosted the 2016 WCRAASC in Bismarck and will be hosting the 2019 WCRAAF in Grand Forks. Being essentially a "remote community" as an area, we have recently undertaken some redistricting, with less served district committees/groups being absorbed by their neighboring districts. — *Scott M.*

**Nova Scotia, Newfoundland/Labrador:** Area 82 has 17 districts with 215 groups, 73 in Newfoundland/Labrador and 143 in Nova Scotia. Being separated by the Atlantic Ocean makes travel expensive and time-consuming, which proves to be one of our bigger challenges. Another challenge is carrying the A.A. message into Labrador. Our newly elected Remote Communities chair is planning a trip later this year to some of the more remote areas of Labrador. Members in Corner Brook have been having weekly Skype meetings with newer members in Wabush

and Labrador City. In the spring the area officers meet in each province with G.S.R.s at the service weekend and in the fall we meet at the area assembly, which rotates between the two provinces. We have very active intergroups in each province, which provide many essential group services. This year the All-Atlantic Conference of Young People in Alcoholic Anonymous is being held in Corner Brook, May 26-28. Throughout the year many districts hold A.A. days and weekend roundups, which provide the members with opportunities to share their experience, strength and hope with each other. In the past few years we have had the pleasure of working with Area 81 to strengthen unity within the Atlantic provinces. We were pleased to play a small part in helping Area 81 host the Canadian Eastern Regional A.A. Service Assembly (CERAASA) earlier this year. — *Tim M.*

**Ohio (Central and Southeast Ohio):** Area 53 is the largest of four areas in Ohio. The Ohio River is our southern border spreading up north to Harden county to the west and Jefferson county to the east. Last reported, Area 53 has 21 districts, approximately 9,959 individual members, 857 reported groups, with about 25% contributing. Area 53 does manage to meet its financial responsibility to the General Service Office, delegate and other officer and standing committee expenses, while maintaining the prudent reserve. We were able to elect officers to every standing committee except one. Our correctional facilities support is quite impressive, generating thousands of funds quarterly through a jugs donation program, every dollar of which is spent on books and literature designed to help the incarcerated. Currently we are in the process of voting to add a new "IT web page services" standing committee chair position. Quarterly area assemblies are well attended with D.C.M.s and G.S.R.s, as well as present and past officers. Past delegates get a voice and a vote. Earlier this year, a new segment was introduced to the Area 53 agenda: each quarterly assembly will examine the Mini-Conference committee, Area 53 committee, Area 53 assembly, or the Membership and Financial Support. Inventory questions are presented and members are encouraged to speak their views at the microphone. The area committee will review the results. Members feel that these inventories will help improve attendance and be more effective in our primary purpose of serving the alcoholic usefully and well. — *Frank G.*

**Ohio (Northeast):** Ohio has 88 counties; Area 54 contains 20 of those counties. There are approximately 1,500 registered groups in Area 54 and 62 districts within our boundaries. The area committee consists of six area officers, D.C.M.s from the 62 geographically defined districts including a Spanish-speaking district, and ten area committee chairs. The area committee is responsible for the health of the conference structure and thus for growth and harmony in the Fellowship. There are eight intergroup/central offices in Area 54. We hold six area assemblies each year. In addition, our area hosts two workshops: G.S.R. school and a D.C.M. college. In August 2016 we hosted our 60th Ohio State Convention in Westlake, Ohio, and in February 2017 the 53rd International Women's Conference will be held in downtown Cleveland. Founders' Day (June 9-10, 2017) will celebrate A.A.'s 82nd Anniversary in Akron, Ohio. Area 54 has been working with our young people and OYPAA's 33rd Convention was held in Area 54 and in the fall of 2017 the 36th Convention will be held in Akron, Ohio. Additionally, in Northeast Ohio we are working closely with our Hispanic liaison in order to rejoin with our Hispanic population. In Alcoholics Anonymous it does not matter what language you verbally speak, because we are all speaking the language of the heart. — *Jamie B.*

**Oklahoma:** Area 57 is made up of 69,960 square miles wherein 408 registered A.A. groups meet regularly with approximately 8,800 members, an increase in membership of almost a thousand over our last count taken two years ago. We have eight districts, two located in Oklahoma City, two located in Tulsa, each metro area with an intergroup or central office, and four districts in the rural parts of the state. Each district has an equal number of D.C.M.s. We also have a Spanish sub-district, with nine active Hispanic groups across our state. Area 57 has four quarterly area committee meetings and one area assembly per year. Our area office, which also houses an extensive archives collection, is staffed by a paid secretary. Last year we held twelve area-hosted workshops in Oklahoma's rural areas featuring a variety of service topics. Area 57 holds an annual service conference known as "Fun in the Fellowship," designed to spark interest in all service committees, featuring G.S.R. and D.C.M. schools as well as committee workshops. Each year Area 57 hosts the Southwest Regional Delegate Assembly in Oklahoma City, preparing new delegates for the General Service Conference. Area 57 has an active technology committee currently developing a new mobile-friendly website which joins an existing area-wide texting service. The IT Committee has also developed technology-based reading materials for those who can't make meetings. The first-ever Heartland Area Conference of Young People in A.A. was held last March, bringing to Oklahoma City members from nine states with incredible energy and passion for our Three Legacies. — *Ben B.*

**Ontario (Eastern):** Area 83 has 599 registered groups, including 20 correctional groups. There are 19 more groups than in 2011, which means we are slowly growing within our 35,000 sq. km perimeter. We have one linguistic district serving our Spanish-speaking members. The area is unique in that district 42 is in Northwest NY state, which gives Area 83 our international flair. We are the smallest area within Ontario but it can take five to six hours to drive to a service day. We completed an area inventory last year and are in the process of implementing the ad hoc committee's recommendations. We hold four assemblies a term with both spring assemblies being Conference assemblies. We also have seven area committee meetings within our term. Despite attendance being down at our election assembly and area committee meeting, we have elected a great team. As you are aware, A.A. and Area 83 lost a great man. Joe D. passed away in

December 2016 and we were proud of him becoming a director, Class B trustee and chair of A.A.W.S. Joe was very active within Area 83, attending all area committee meetings and assemblies when there were not board meetings. His willingness to help, as well as his advice and humor, will be missed by us all in Area 83. — *Kim S.*

**Ontario (Northwest):** Area 85 is a fair size, going from Hornepayne in the east to the Manitoba border in the west, about 1,017 kilometers or 632 miles, and from the Canadian-American border in the south to Hudson Bay up north. Currently we have seven active districts hosting 55 groups, with around 900 members attending meetings. Our area roundup this year will be held on May 6-7 in Thunder Bay. Our Remote Communities committee continues to hold online meetings every Wednesday at 1 p.m. for our members in remote communities up north, accessible only by winter roads or aircraft. Area 85 has two assemblies a year, one in the fall held every year in Thunder Bay, and a spring assembly, which we move around to different districts. At our fall assembly, we held elections for Area 85 officers and all positions were filled. This year's spring assembly host was district 2 in Schreiber. Financially we are holding our own, but are more strained this year due to traveling expenses for the Area 85 delegate and alternate delegate going to CERAASA. — *Bob D.*

**Pennsylvania (Eastern):** Area 59, located in the eastern part of Pennsylvania, is comprised of 48 districts, one of which is a linguistic district, 1,642 groups, 32,661 members, and covers approximately half of Pennsylvania or 23,000 square miles. Our area committee meets quarterly to conduct business. Area 59 conducts service work via the "committee system" through eight standing subcommittees and one ad hoc subcommittee. Each D.C.M. is assigned to serve one of these subcommittees. The area hosts an annual assembly and convention that attracts about 1,000 attendees. Our 58th annual E.P.G.S.A. Convention in 2016 was a wonderful success and was held in the historic town of Gettysburg. The area committee conducts many service events throughout each panel to help carry the message, such as a D.C.M. orientation very early in our new panel and a pre-Conference sharing session to inform the delegate of the areas conscience on selected agenda items. The area hosts two annual delegate Conference Reports open to all interested members. In addition, the delegate makes reports to interested host Districts and workshops throughout the year. We cooperate with the 10 intergroup/CSOs and YPAA by holding share-a-days throughout the panel. We hold an area inventory and host Area Day once each panel to help inform members of the benefits of general service. During the second year in the panel the D.C.M.s hold a sharing session to discuss opportunities to be more effective in carrying the message and providing service to our area. The area has the services of a volunteer archivist and an assistant. Their service is important to Area 59 because they are effective at keeping area history alive, informative and useful. Our area P.I. committee continues to improve communications via our website. They actively research ways to apply technology in order to reach all who seek information about Alcoholics Anonymous in this "digital age." The area committee supports outreach to members who may need special accessibility or accommodation, like Spanish or ASL Interpreters at area events. And presently we are holding a trial of an area newsletter entitled *"We…"* as a tool to improve communications throughout Area 59. — *Paul M.*

**Pennsylvania (Western):** Area 60 offers a strong fellowship, with 458 groups and 44 districts serving more than 10,000 members. It has six elected officers and four appointed officers. We have two intergroups that provide meeting schedules, literature and recovery opportunities. Area 60 has seven standing committees: P.I./C.P.C., Treatment S/N, Corrections, Website, Grapevine, Literature and Archives. We have four quarterly meetings as well as three service assemblies. Service workshops are given prior to each of these meetings. Recently districts have been chosen to have the option of hosting one of the quarterly meetings. We have several of these meetings scheduled during the coming year. The budget is approved at the fall assembly and elections take place at this time every other year. Each spring Area 60 host its annual Get Away Weekend where Conference agenda items are reviewed and discussed through committee meetings. This is followed by our pre-Conference assembly where the group conscience is shared with the delegate through a mock Conference. Area officers and coordinators are available to attend district days of sharing that present workshops and assist districts as needed. All area officers and coordinators encourage interest and participation in service work at all levels. Young people are assuming more responsibility in the area service structure, which is imperative to develop our future trusted servants. A goal over the coming year is to increase district participation in area service. Area 60 participates in the Pennsylvania State Convention and hopes to increase its participation in the future. Our past delegates have a vital role in the Area 60 service structure, with a vote as well as providing their experience, strength and hope as elder statesmen. We have an area newsletter that is published quarterly and helps to carry the message of recovery. Our archivist was able to begin the process of preserving our history as an area after years of neglect. This will be an ongoing process. During the coming year, Area 60 will have the honor of hosting the N.E.R.F. in Mars, PA. The accommodations are excellent and the location is central to transportation needs. Akron, Ohio, home to Dr. Bob and where it all began, is an hour-and-a-half drive from the event. There will be many local meetings available for you to attend. — *John K.*

**Québec (Northeast):** Area 89 is a vast territory stretching from Louiseville in the west to Blanc-Sablon in the east and from North Chibougamau to south Lévis, about 400,000 square kilometers. We have six standing committees and one working group, and hold two general assemblies each year (a plenary and a sharing session) and four regional assemblies. For our regional meeting in December, in even years we have a meeting called "Welcoming the

Newcomers" and in odd years it is our regional inventory, both for a whole weekend. Our large and beautiful area counts 21 districts, with 264 groups, including 268 French-speaking, four English, two bilingual, one Atikamekw and two in Innu language. There are 295 meetings per week and we count 4,311 members. Our Regional Executive Committee meets three times a year with the regional committees of the three other Quebec areas. As delegate, we have the responsibility and privilege to be trustees of our bimonthly magazine La Vigne. Eastern Quebec has an effective and user-friendly website and a Seminars Committee which shares knowledge and experience of our principles and our legacy of service. Our area also has the honor and privilege of holding a Native Convention in Pessamit on the north shore of the St. Laurence River. August will mark the 17th year of this convention. Additionally, we count on an intergroup in Quebec City where we have various service committees. We also have an administrative assistant who is the "ears" of our area. — *Benoît B.*

**Québec (Southeast):** Area 88 covers a vast territory, created in December 1974, bounded on the west by Lake St. Pierre, to the east by the Magdalena Islands, to the north through the St. Lawrence River and to the south by the U.S. border. As of January 2017, our area has 18 districts, which currently have 168 groups. They hold 200 meetings and include 2,250 members. Annually, we hold three area meetings in addition to a general meeting to elect our trusted servants. Our area has the important contribution of five service committees: public information, La Vigne, C.P.C., the web and archives. Pre-Conference workshops prepare the delegate for the Conference. Each year two gratitude dinners bring the members together for a great time. Proceeds go entirely to G.S.O. In communicating the joy of service, this is our goal: to "Support Our Future." Presently the chair of the Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee meets in interested districts with members to form subcommittees of C.P.C. We already have three that do a great job. — *Jean-Noël L.*

**Saskatchewan:** Area 91 covers the entire province of Saskatchewan, with several large centers in the middle and southern areas and many remote areas to our north. We have about 271 registered groups in 18 districts with very dedicated and enthusiastic D.C.M.s and alternates. We are entering a very exciting time in our area. After about four years of discussion, trial periods and some resistance, we have finally formally instituted a full-blown committee system to be used at all future area assemblies and area committee meetings which began in earnest last fall. At our fall assembly in October 2016, we elected seven new committee chairs and the process began. Committee members consisting of D.C.M.s and alternates were then assigned to committees at our area committee meetings last January. Preliminary discussions were held to begin establishing guidelines and visions and we selected the rest of the committee members from G.S.R.s and alternates at our 2017 spring assembly to complete the process. In the beginning, we encountered some strong resistance with respect to the committee system, due to the increase it would cause in our budget for added expenses of new committee chairs, meetings, etc. However, those who supported these changes were able to effectively carry the message to their districts and groups and we experienced an increase in contributions that were well above what we had budgeted in the first place. We have witnessed a great show of support and dedication that has added so much to the overall enthusiasm of our area. — *Ed S.*

**Texas (Northeast):** Area 65 covers approximately 70,000 square miles, from Texarkana to Abilene east to west, and from the Red River to Waco north to south, with the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex in between. We have more than 475 active groups in our area, and by our best estimate around 19,000 members. We have 29 districts: 24 for our English-speaking groups and five for our Spanish-speaking groups. Each year, we have three area assemblies (spring, summer and fall), plus a G.S.R./D.C.M. orientation workshop. One of the orientations is held centrally, one is in the western portion of our geography and the other is in the eastern portion, with each of the three sessions following the same format. The presentation outline touches on our general service structure from the top to the bottom of the upside-down triangle, providing area-specific information as well, with hopes of dialing back the intimidation factor that folks new to general service often experience. We typically hold two of the three assemblies in the central part of the area, with the third held outside the metroplex. At the spring assembly, we break into mock committees to review the items on the Conference final agenda, to gather the collective conscience of the Fellowship in our area and send the delegate off well informed, but not instructed. At the summer assembly, the body allows a generous amount of time for the delegate to report back about the Conference. We have 12 standing committees which, together with our D.C.M.s and area officers, meet four times a year as an area committee. Our biggest struggles over the last few years have been waning participation in the standing committees (even some chair positions unfilled for parts of the panel) and technological challenges (positions becoming more technical, along with the rest of the world). — *Keith D.*

**Texas (Southeast):** Area 67 is located in southeast Texas and extends approximately 30,000 square miles. The area is centered around Houston as the major city and we have 691 registered groups. These groups are in 18 districts, five of which are Spanish-speaking districts. The diverse language requirements have led to a very innovative Area 67 Multilingual Committee. Recently at our area assembly, the Multilingual Committee was successful in using a cell-phone conference call service to expand the use of our translation capabilities. Area 67 has quarterly area assemblies in January, April, July and October. The January assembly is held in conjunction with the area convention that rotates between Galveston, Houston, College Station and Beaumont. The April assembly features our "Round Tables" workshop where selected Conference agenda

items are discussed and concerns are shared with the delegate. The July assembly features the delegate's Conference report. At each assembly, we also have a G.S.R. workshop, a D.C.M.-delegate sharing session and D.C.M. and committee chairperson reports. In Area 67 we conduct an area inventory every five years, with the next one in 2017. The past area inventories have proven to be beneficial in solving personality issues along with focusing the area on service. Area 67 has a strong legacy of service, dating back to February 1940 when A.A. came to Texas with the first meeting in Houston. Area 67 also had a Panel 1 delegate at the very first General Service Conference, and has a rich history of involvement and participation of all of our past delegates. — *Ron C.*

**Utah:** Area 69 has 12 districts with 385 active groups, covering a total of 84,899 square miles. District 9 is the smallest district with one group and District 10 is the largest with 119 groups. Spanish-speaking District 12 has eight total groups, which covers the entire state. District 7 covers 17,640 square miles, which is half the size of Maine or the size of two New Jerseys. One of the biggest challenges we have in Area 69 is District 12 that covers the entire state, in which most of the active groups are in metro areas, leaving the rural areas with no Spanish-speaking meetings. All the area service positions have been filled and energy in the district meetings is starting to be felt in rural areas. — *Wade J.*

**Virginia:** Area 71 has approximately 1,200 active groups, 18 of which are Spanish-speaking and 101 of which are held in correctional facilities. We have 12 intergroups and 42 active districts. We hold four area events per year: two assemblies and two planning meetings. We rotate event locations to give local A.A.s a chance to participate. We have 11 standing committees that range from finance to archives. In addition to our annual state convention, Area 71 hosts an archives open house, a P.I./C.P.C. workshop and a corrections workshop. We share a collective passion for service and love of A.A. at the Virginia area. Often times we have close to 500 A.A.s, including approximately 10 past delegates, in attendance at our area assemblies. I would describe our service structure as mature, which is a far stretch from early A.A. in Virginia. In fact, one of oldest Virginia groups started in Richmond in 1940 where members, lacking much guidance from New York, sat around, played cards and drank beer! — *Elliott B.*

**Washington (Western):** Area 72 has 42 districts with more than 1,500 groups. Our two Spanish-speaking districts will host our first-ever Local Forum (Foro Local) later this year in July. Their energy and dedication enable us to see that language and culture differences cannot stop the joy that we feel when we work with others to carry the message. As we now have a D.C.M. who is Deaf, it's wonderful to see that hearing challenges cannot stop the message of hope and recovery either. We cooperate with members of nearby areas during the annual Pacific Northwest Conference, which Area 72 will host in June. Meanwhile, our area archivist will represent us during the National A.A. Archives Workshop, and our area webmaster will represent us during the National A.A. Technology Workshop. In this way, we will have access to knowledge, skills and experiences of other areas. The sum of all this effort will be increased power of the area to help groups ease the suffering of others. — *Steve C.*

**West Virginia:** 2017 marks Area 73's 75th anniversary and will be celebrated in conjunction with our 65th state convention. Our assemblies and conventions rotate around the state, giving each district the opportunity to serve as host. Our past delegates play a vital role in our service structure. We held our first Mini- or Mock-Conference last spring. Our members enthusiastically participated and this will now be an annual event. Our younger members, many less than two years sober, held the second annual WVCYPAA Convention last year. Even though our area offered to financially help these energetic young people, they have been totally self-supporting. A report on their activities is now included at our area assemblies. Area 73 supports a statewide 800# hotline. Our website gets a lot of traffic and was recently redesigned; a real miracle, since little more than a dozen years ago there was strong opposition to even having a website. Despite economic, technological and logistical challenges facing our area, interest and participation in general service is steadily increasing. — *Pat T.*

**Wisconsin (Southern):** Area 75 currently has more than 1,000 groups, served by 31 districts, including one Spanish-speaking linguistic district. In addition, five central or intergroup offices serve the area. We hold four all-day service assemblies plus a fall conference assembly and a delegate's workshop. At our winter and summer assemblies, the area holds a G.S.R. school and a D.C.M. sharing session. A delegate's workshop is held in March to give the Fellowship an opportunity to review and provide feedback on upcoming General Service Conference agenda items. The delegate's report on the General Service Conference is shared at our summer service assembly. Our Corrections Committee continues to carry the message into a wide variety of correctional institutions and participates in "Re-entry Fairs." We purchase A.A. literature for correctional facilities using funds donated through our corrections literature program. Our P.I., Treatment and C.P.C. chairs are continuing to build relationships with the Veterans Administration Hospital staff. In 2016, we held our ninth annual A.A. at the VA mini-conference. Our Special Needs Committee has started a Deaf Access Committee in response to members who are Deaf and may be struggling with accessibility. Some of their activities include fostering awareness of the Deaf community in A.A. and administering funds to pay for interpreters in A.A. meetings. The funds are generated through voluntary contributions, similar to the corrections literature fund. There will be a local forum for our Spanish-speaking district later this year. We have active area committees and together we are committed to carrying A.A.'s message. — *Barb W.*

# Additional Committee Considerations

*Advisory Action 40 of the 1990 General Service Conference states: "Items discussed, but no action taken or recommendation made, as well as committee recommendations which are not adopted, be included in a separate section of the* Final Report*." Items, listed by committee, are summarized as follows:*

### AGENDA

The committee discussed Conference presentation/discussions and took no action to limit their number or preclude them from the 2018 Conference agenda, noting topics selected for 2018 were important for discussion at the Conference; with a low number of responses to the 2016 Conference Evaluation Form it was agreed to emphasize that all Conference members have an obligation to participate and encouraged efforts to make the form more focused and user-friendly; appreciation was noted for the additional communication and larger role for delegates in the selection of agenda items, with a request that information be gathered from 2018 Conference committee chairs and an enhanced role for delegates continue to be explored; it was requested that the grid of proposed Conference agenda items be updated to show the disposition of items by the trustees' committees and that it be posted to the dashboard as soon as possible following the January Board Weekend; no action was taken on a request to add text to the committee's Composition, Scope and Procedure regarding the option to meet by conference call prior to the Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference.

### ARCHIVES*

No action was taken on a request to add text to the committee's Composition, Scope and Procedure regarding the option to meet by conference call prior to the Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference; the committee suggested refreshing the "Shared Experiences" section of the Archives Workbook with new stories from local archivists and adding a new section to the "Archives and History" portal of the G.S.O. website to include updates from G.S.O. Archives.

### COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

The committee requested that the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities continue to explore establishing a presence on LinkedIn as a tool for C.P.C. efforts and develop a full report that includes an exploration of all aspects of this social media tool and possibilities for implementation; improving communication about A.A. with professionals who come in contact with veterans and active members of the Armed Services was discussed and a number of suggestions made; no action was taken on a request to add text to the committee's Composition, Scope and Procedure regarding the option to meet by conference call prior to the Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference; the C.P.C. Kit and Workbook were reviewed, with the suggestion that the sample guide letters to various professionals be reviewed and updated to ensure that the language used is current and relevant to the professionals to whom they are addressed.

### CORRECTIONS

The committee discussed raising awareness of the Corrections Correspondence Service (C.C.S.) in Canada and its benefits to both "inside" and "outside" members, making a number of suggestions and asking G.S.O. staff and the trustees' Committee on Corrections to look into additional options that could encourage broader utilization; carrying the A.A. message to incarcerated Native American/First Nations/Inuit People was discussed with agreement that local committees were best able to handle this important work, though to aid in carrying the message to this population, the committee suggested adding the pamphlet "Many Paths to Spirituality" to the Corrections Kit and the Corrections Group Handbook; the committee noted that some incarcerated French and Spanish members have difficulty with subtitles in the video "A New Freedom," and requested that A.A.W.S. make the message more accessible and consider developing a service piece to accompany the video.

### FINANCE

The committee agreed that the Conference-approved level of $5,000 for individual bequests to the General Service Board from A.A. members is an appropriate amount at this time; self-support efforts and materials were discussed with suggestions made for the Self-Support Packet, the Self-Support Card, the service piece "The A.A. Group Treasurer" and other aspects of communicating with the Fellowship about the

*Members serve on this committee as a secondary committee assignment.

spiritual message of Seventh Tradition contributions; communication about recurring contributions was discussed along with possibility of using an app to further increase carrying the message of recovery and self-support; the committee requested the trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee develop a list of Conference-approved literature where adding language regarding online and recurring contributions is appropriate and report back to the 2018 Conference Finance Committee.

### GRAPEVINE

The committee discussed the spiritual value of Grapevine and La Viña in carrying the message of Alcoholics Anonymous and agreed that the magazines are important Twelfth Step tools, recognizing that Grapevine and La Viña cannot accept contributions and are self-supporting only through subscriptions and sales of books and other items; it was suggested that the Grapevine Board create a plan for outside sales of subscriptions, books and other items and report back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Grapevine; continued exploration of Instagram, Facebook and Google for Nonprofits accounts was discussed with a request for additional information and plans to be brought back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Grapevine for consideration; it was suggested that all delegates consider it a part of their responsibility to inform the Fellowship about Grapevine and La Viña as tools of sobriety, either through their own efforts or by recruiting others through email and area websites; the committee forwarded a number of suggestions to the A.A. Grapevine Board for items to be produced in the year 2018 or later and additions to the Grapevine workbook; an update on the 2017 Grapevine Office Report on Audio Strategy was requested for the 2018 Conference Committee on the Grapevine.

### INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS/ REGIONAL FORUMS*

The committee discussed ways of encouraging interest in Regional Forums to attract first-time attendees and made a number of suggestions; the committee reviewed the 2030 International Convention Site-Selection Procedures; no action was taken to add text to the committee's Composition, Scope and Procedure regarding the option to meet by conference call prior to the Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference.

### LITERATURE

The committee discussed but took no action on a request to retire the pamphlet "Too Young?"; after reviewing draft revisions or progress reports, the committee offered editorial suggestions for "Young People and A.A.," "A.A. for the Woman," "Finding Acceptance: A.A. for the LGBTQ Alcoholic" (formerly "A.A. and the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic"), "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated," "Inside A.A.: Understanding the Fellowship and Its Services," and a pamphlet-in-progress for alcoholics with mental health issues and those who sponsor them, with the understanding that revised drafts or progress reports, where appropriate, would be brought back at the 2018 General Service Conference; a request was made that the trustees' Public Information Committee consider adding information related to safety to the pamphlets "A Brief Guide to A.A." and "Understanding Anonymity"; the committee considered requests for the development of new literature regarding safety in A.A. and took no action, agreeing that shared experience regarding safety and A.A. would be best conveyed by revising existing literature, where appropriate, and noting that the new service piece, "Safety and A.A.: Our Common Welfare," has been found helpful in providing experience from groups and members on challenges, resources and possible solutions in situations that may involve the safety of groups or individual members; no action was taken on a request to add a section "Why A.A. groups and members should respect the rental requirements of their landlords" to the pamphlet "The A.A. Group," as it was agreed that an A.A. group's relationship with their landlord falls within the autonomy of the group.

### POLICY/ADMISSIONS

The committee discussed but took no action on requests for regional service committees to bid on hosting the General Service Conference, that the Advisory Action delegating site selection for the General Service Conference to G.S.O. management be rescinded, that a "YPAA Subcommittee" be added to the service structure, and that text be added to the committee's Composition, Scope and Procedure regarding the option to meet by conference call prior to the Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference.

### PUBLIC INFORMATION

The committee reviewed and accepted reports from the trustees' Public Information Committee regarding aa.org and aagrapevine.org, the Comprehensive Media Plan, and Carrying the Message Online and on Social Media, and requested that the trustees' committee continue to develop their ideas on the use of quick response (QR) codes, a video on anonymity and the Internet, and a daily text message, along with the development of service materials to address frequently asked questions regarding anonymity online and in social media, noting that the service piece "Anonymity Online" is still a valuable resource; information was reviewed and accepted on centralized distribution, tracking and evaluation of the public service announcement "I Have Hope"; suggestions were made that the trustees' Committee on Public Information continue to research the feasibility of A.A.W.S. using Google AdWords and Google Grants and bring a report to the 2018 Conference Committee on Public Information; a report from the trustees' Public Information Committee on the implementation of a Twitter account was reviewed with no action taken and continued pursuit of options for carrying the A.A. message to the public on social media was suggested; specific suggestions were offered for the pamphlet "Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings" to include revised text regarding the source of information identifying one-third of A.A. members as women and adding website information as needed; the contents of the P.I. Kit and Workbook were reviewed; no action was taken to add text to the

*Members serve on this committee as a secondary committee assignment.

committee's Composition, Scope and Procedure regarding the option to meet by conference call prior to the Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference.

### REPORT AND CHARTER

The committee discussed and accepted reports outlining the General Service Office process for preparation and publication of *The A.A. Service Manual*, 2018-2020 Edition and the 2017 *Final Conference Report*; the complexities involved in biennial production of *The A.A. Service Manual* were discussed, noting that the process is still in its infancy and that substantive changes to the Service Manual can be found in the *Final Conference Report* as well as the Report and Charter Conference Committee's History and Highlights of Actions in years that a revised edition is not published; suggested revisions were offered to the proposed Service Manual updates from the General Service Board and the A.A. Grapevine Board; a plan for a revised editorial review process was requested to be brought back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Report and Charter along with suggestions on how changes to *The A.A. Service Manual* could be reported to the Fellowship in non-printing years; it was suggested that footnotes be added to *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service* to accurately reflect in Concept VIII the current ownership of the service corporations as presented in Footnote 3, Concept XI, and that the year A.A.W.S., Inc. and A.A. Grapevine, Inc. became membership corporations in the state of New York be added to both footnotes; no action was taken to add text to the committee's Composition, Scope and Procedure regarding the option to meet by conference call prior to the Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference.

### TREATMENT AND ACCESSIBILITIES

The committee reviewed the Treatment Service Kit and made several suggestions for revisions; it was suggested that the title, menu and introduction to the DVD and CD currently titled "A.A. for the Alcoholic with Special Needs" be revised to "Accessibility for All Alcoholics," with subtitles in French and Spanish for the DVD; ways of incorporating shared experience in carrying the A.A. message to members of the Armed Services were discussed, including sharing at the pre-Conference Remote Communities meeting and translation of the pamphlet "A.A. and the Armed Services" into French and Spanish and adding it to the Accessibilities Kit; a request was made that the General Service Office continue exploring strategies to provide more effective services to alcoholics who are veterans and active members of the Armed Services and provide a progress report to the 2018 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities; no action was taken to add text to the committee's Composition, Scope and Procedure regarding the option to meet by conference call prior to the Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference.

### TRUSTEES

The committee approved as eligible for election all Class B trustee candidates and discussed the voting procedures for electing trustee-at-large/U.S. and a request to consider the need to restructure the number of regions and number of regional trustees serving on the General Service Board; a progress report was requested from the trustees' Committee on Nominating to the 2018 Conference Committee on Trustees reviewing available information on regional geographical structure, including consideration of each regional trustees' ability to effectively serve his or her areas, consideration of geographical factors and whether an equal or similar number of areas per region is desirable, as well as feasibility and cost analysis.

## *Recommendations Not Resulting in Conference Advisory Actions*

### CORRECTIONS

- The following text be added to the Composition, Scope and Procedure of the Conference Committee on Corrections:

  In order to assist Conference committees in handling their workload, if a Conference committee feels it is helpful to complete the work of their committee, they are welcome to meet via conference call in the 60 days prior to the Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference. They may use the call for such things as deciding how to conduct their business, including the means of voting within the committee, reordering the items on their agenda if needed, and holding preliminary non-voting discussions on what they consider to be priority agenda items. Conference committee secretaries would be available to facilitate these meetings. **(Withdrawn by the committee)**

### FINANCE

- The Conference-approved maximum annual contribution to the General Service Board from an individual A.A. member of $3,000 be increased to $5,000. **(Not approved)**
- The following text be added to the pamphlet "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix": "Question: Are there limits to the amount of money an A.A. group or an A.A. event can contribute to G.S.O.? Answer: No," and include this language in all appropriate service material. **(Not approved)**

- The following text be added to the committee's Composition, Scope and Procedure:

  The committee may meet by conference call in the 60 days prior to Conference for such things as deciding how to conduct their business, including the means of voting within the committee, reordering the items on their agenda if needed, and holding preliminary non-voting discussions on what they consider to be priority items. **(Withdrawn by the committee)**

**GRAPEVINE**

- The following text be added to the Composition, Scope and Procedure of the Conference Committee on Grapevine under procedures:

  In order to assist the committee in handling its workload, the committee is welcome to meet via conference call in the 60 days prior to the Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference. They may use the call for such things as deciding how to conduct their business, including the means of voting within the committee, reordering the items on their agenda if needed, and holding preliminary non-voting discussions on what they consider to be priority agenda items. Conference committee secretaries would be available to facilitate these meetings. **(Withdrawn by the committee)**

**LITERATURE**

- The following text be added to the Composition, Scope and Procedure of the Conference Committee on Literature under procedures:

  In order to assist the committee in handling its workload, the committee is welcome to meet via conference call in the 60 days prior to the Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference. They may use the call for such things as deciding how to conduct their business, including the means of voting within the committee, reordering the items on their agenda if needed, and holding preliminary non-voting discussions on what they consider to be priority agenda items. Conference committee secretaries would be available to facilitate these meetings. **(Withdrawn by the committee)**

**POLICY/ADMISSIONS**

- Option 2 in the Final Report on the Translation of Conference Background be implemented for the Spanish language only for a three-year trial period, and that an annual report from the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference be presented for review by the Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions. **(Recommitted to trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference)**
- The General Service Conference be held in New York City every other year. **(Not approved)**

**PUBLIC INFORMATION**

- The 2017 A.A. Membership Survey be conducted by area on a random basis as was done in the 2014 A.A. Membership Survey and requested that the trustees' Committee on Public Information review the current A.A. Membership Survey methodology, possible methods for surveying the membership electronically and any reasonable hybrid of the two methods, and that a progress report be brought back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Public Information. **(Not approved)**
- The draft 2017 A.A. Survey Questionnaire be changed as follows:

  Question 2 be changed from "Sex: __ Male ___ Female" to "Gender Identity: ___ Male ___ Female ___ [language to include all gender nonconforming] __ No Response" **(Recommitted to trustees' Committee on Public Information)**

**TRUSTEES**

- The following text be added to the Composition, Scope and Procedure of the Conference Committee on Trustees:

  In order to assist Conference committees in handling their workload, if a Conference committee feels it is helpful to complete the work of their committee, they are welcome to meet via conference call in the 60 days prior to the Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference. They may use the call for such things as deciding how to conduct their business, including the means of voting within the committee, reordering the items on their agenda if needed, and holding preliminary non-voting discussions on what they consider to be priority agenda items. Conference committee secretaries would be available to facilitate these meetings. **(Withdrawn by the committee)**

## *Floor Actions Not Resulting in Conference Advisory Actions*

- In order to reduce the current annual cost of more than $50,000 and set an example for the Fellowship regarding our principles of rotation and financial prudence, the General Service Board develop a plan to allow no more than the immediate past chair of the General Service Board and two other emeritus trustees to attend each Board Weekend and the annual General Service Conference. **(Not approved)**
- The Conference adopt Option 1 on the translation of Conference background material into Spanish and French as it is presented in the agenda and background for Policy/Admissions. **(Withdrawn)**
- That the submission letters for proposed agenda items be placed on the Conference dashboard. **(Not approved)**
- The General Service Board develop a policy regarding limits on contributions to the board from groups and other A.A. entities, recognizing that groups and entities are autonomous in regard to both giving and accepting contributions. A draft text or progress report be brought to the appropriate committee of the 2018 General Service Conference. **(Conference declined to consider)**
- The General Service Conference of A.A. extend an invitation to the YPAA to have two of their members attend the 2018 General Service Conference as observers. **(Conference declined to consider)**

# The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc.
# Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. • Alcoholics Anonymous Grapevine, Inc.
# CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Year Ended December 31, 2016 (with comparative totals for 2015)

| | General Service Board of A.A. | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | General Fund | Reserve Fund | Capital Projects Fund | Postretirement Medical Fund | Pension Benefits | A.A. World Services, Inc. | A.A. Grapevine, Inc. | Consolidated 2016 | Consolidated 2015 |
| **ASSETS** | | | | | | | | | |
| Cash | $ 1,624,063 | $ 1,580,447 | | $ 53,017 | | $ 1,352,862 | $ 419,470 | $ 5,029,859 | $ 8,459,658 |
| Accounts and interest receivable | | 2,917 | | | | 298,344 | 45,795 | 347,056 | 225,777 |
| Intercompany balances | (1,736,195) | (1,955,800) | | | | 1,685,575 | 2,006,420 | - | - |
| Inventories | | | | | | | | | |
| Books, pamphlets, etc. | | | | | | 1,274,436 | 207,043 | 1,481,479 | 1,636,492 |
| Paper, prepublication costs, etc. | | | | | | 225,633 | 22,752 | 248,385 | 123,646 |
| Investments - at fair value (Note 2) | | 15,331,170 | | 3,832,954 | | | | 19,164,124 | 14,045,233 |
| Property, Equipment and Software (net of accumulated depreciation and amortization of 2016 – $5,014,550; 2015 – $5,221,942) (Note 2) | | | $1,403,431 | | | 262,591 | 107,563 | 1,773,585 | 1,739,317 |
| Deferred charges and deposits | 39,926 | | | | | 209,648 | 56,147 | 305,721 | 318,675 |
| Prepaid conventions | 131,017 | | | | | | | 131,017 | 132,392 |
| **Total Assets** | 58,811 | 14,958,734 | 1,403,431 | 3,885,971 | $ - | 5,309,089 | 2,865,190 | 28,481,226 | 26,681,190 |
| **LIABILITIES** | | | | | | | | | |
| Accounts and accruals payable | $ 1,798 | | | | | $ 785,313 | $ 110,155 | $ 897,266 | $ 878,780 |
| Deferred income orders and subscriptions, etc. | | | | | | 83,240 | 1,841,125 | 1,924,365 | 2,011,657 |
| Accrued postretirement health benefits | | | | $7,668,760 | | | | 7,668,760 | 7,186,857 |
| Accrued pension benefits | | | | | $5,246,569 | | | 5,246,569 | 6,059,283 |
| **Total Liabilities** | 1,798 | $ - | $ - | 7,668,760 | 5,246,569 | 868,553 | 1,951,280 | 15,736,960 | 16,136,577 |
| Net Assets (Exhibit B) | 57,013 | 14,958,734 | 1,403,431 | (3,782,789) | (5,246,569) | 4,440,536 | 913,910 | 12,744,266 | 10,544,613 |
| **Total Liabilities and Net Assets** | 58,811 | 14,958,734 | 1,403,431 | 3,885,971 | - | 5,309,089 | 2,865,190 | 28,481,226 | 26,681,190 |

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

# The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc.
# Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. • Alcoholics Anonymous Grapevine, Inc.
# CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY
## Year Ended December 31, 2016 (with comparative totals for 2015)

| | General Service Board of A.A. | | | | | | A.A. Grapevine, Inc. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | General Fund | Reserve Fund | Capital Projects Fund | Postretirement Medical Fund | Pension Benefits | A.A. World Services, Inc. | Grapevine | La Viña | Consolidated 2016 | Consolidated 2015 |
| **INCOME AND COST OF LITERATURE** | | | | | | | | | | |
| Gross Sales | | | | | | $13,413,929 | $2,818,338 | $152,777 | $16,385,044 | $15,809,670 |
| Less: Discounts | | | | | | 224,671 | - | - | 224,671 | 230,789 |
| **Net Sales** | | | | | | 13,189,258 | 2,818,338 | 152,777 | 16,160,373 | 15,578,881 |
| Cost of Literature Distributed | | | | | | | | | | |
| Printing | | | | | | (2,639,942) | (325,258) | (44,534) | (3,009,734) | (3,115,130) |
| Royalties on books | | | | | | - | - | - | - | (19,078) |
| Direct shipping and warehousing | | | | | | (1,604,188) | (587,934) | (33,376) | (2,225,498) | (2,232,221) |
| **Gross Profit from Literature** | | | | | | 8,945,128 | 1,905,146 | 74,867 | 10,925,141 | 10,212,452 |
| **CONTRIBUTIONS** | $7,934,869 | | | | | | | | 7,934,869 | 7,154,146 |
| **INVESTMENT INCOME (Note 2)** | 50 | $ 114,799 | | $252,383 | | 392 | 15,100 | - | 382,724 | 49,757 |
| **Total Income** | 7,934,919 | 114,799 | | 252,383 | | 8,945,520 | 1,920,246 | 74,867 | 19,242,734 | 17,416,355 |
| **FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES (Exhibit C)** | | | | | | | | | | |
| Program | 6,136,704 | - | | | | 2,824,160 | 1,130,068 | 226,949 | 10,317,881 | 10,366,621 |
| Supporting services | 3,769,884 | - | $ 215,015 | 26,631 | $ (616,634) | 2,696,473 | 625,639 | - | 6,717,008 | 6,289,133 |
| **Total Expenses** | 9,906,588 | - | 215,015 | 26,631 | (616,334) | 5,520,633 | 1,755,707 | 226,949 | 17,034,889 | 16,655,754 |
| **EXCESS OF INCOME (EXPENSE) FOR YEAR** | (1,971,669) | 114,799 | (215,015) | 225,752 | 616,334 | 3,424,887 | 164,539 | (152,082) | 2,207,854 | 760,601 |
| Change in retirement liabilities – nonoperating | - | - | - | (204,272) | 196,080 | - | - | - | (8,192) | 1,955,784 |
| 2015 International Convention (net of direct expenses of $6,139,569) | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | (210,431) |
| **INTERCOMPANY AND INTERFUND TRANSFERS** | | | | | | | | | | |
| GSB La Viña support | (152,082) | - | - | - | - | - | - | 152,082 | - | - |
| Other transfers | 2,123,751 | 260,000 | 183,169 | - | - | (2,306,920) | (260,000) | - | - | - |
| **CHANGE IN NET ASSETS FOR YEAR** | - | 374,799 | (31,846) | 21,480 | 812,714 | (1,117,967) | (95,461) | - | 2,199,653 | 2,505,954 |
| **NET ASSETS** | | | | | | | | | | |
| Beginning of year | 57,013 | 14,583,935 | 1,435,277 | (3,804,269) | (6,059,283) | 3,322,569 | 1,009,371 | - | 10,544,613 | 8,038,659 |
| **NET ASSETS** | | | | | | | | | | |
| End of year (Exhibit A) | 57,013 | 14,958,734 | 1,403,431 | (3,782,789) | (5,246,569) | 4,440,536 | 913,910 | - | 12,744,266 | 10,544,613 |

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

# The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc.
# Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. • Alcoholics Anonymous Grapevine, Inc.
# CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

Year Ended December 31, 2016 (with comparative totals for 2015)

| OPERATING EXPENSES | Group Services | Fellowship Services | General Service Conference | World Service Meeting | International Convention | Regional Forums | Publishing | Grapevine | La Viña | Supporting Services | 2016 Total | 2015 Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Salaries | $ 959,316 | $1,079,237 | $ 198,689 | | | $178,127 | $1,238,442 | $ 456,854 | $146,978 | $2,692,754 | $ 6,950,397 | $ 6,954,176 |
| Payroll taxes | 65,393 | 83,144 | 14,147 | | | 13,172 | 95,269 | 38,686 | 12,063 | 203,606 | 525,480 | 523,512 |
| Health and group insurance | 125,647 | 159,924 | 27,225 | | | 25,303 | 182,813 | 68,108 | 18,714 | 719,506 | 1,327,240 | 1,373,102 |
| Retirement expense — funding | 253,448 | 320,234 | 53,524 | | $1,929 | 52,920 | 396,374 | 84,125 | 22,815 | 785,521 | 1,970,890 | 1,892,858 |
| Other program printing | 229,905 | 79,694 | 50,531 | $10,280 | | 22,680 | | | | 400 | 393,490 | 386,694 |
| Mailing labor | 88,782 | 7,839 | 4,536 | | | 4,565 | | | | | 105,722 | 112,373 |
| Postage and express | 191,786 | 43,421 | 35,244 | 440 | | 26,876 | 4,830 | 7,373 | | 32,177 | 342,147 | 382,053 |
| Writers fees | 17,806 | 24,145 | 13,105 | 4,300 | | 6,813 | 4,620 | | | 12,143 | 82,932 | 99,787 |
| Foreign literature assistance | | 17,332 | | | | | | | | | 17,332 | 24,889 |
| Selling expenses | | | | | | | 380,310 | 124,055 | 9,067 | 56,583 | 570,015 | 503,960 |
| Professional fees | | 1,302 | | | | | | | 2,515 | 259,175 | 262,992 | 238,634 |
| Contracted services | 60,123 | 179,909 | 88,546 | 45,413 | 1,628 | 30,494 | 193,125 | 167,323 | 7,830 | 852,903 | 1,627,294 | 1,517,899 |
| Occupancy | 106,203 | 137,515 | 10,666 | | | 3,060 | 196,696 | 34,705 | | 373,736 | 862,581 | 888,801 |
| Telephone | 23,545 | 30,034 | 2,979 | | | 2,135 | 13,582 | 16,763 | | 52,817 | 141,855 | 134,793 |
| Equipment maintenance | 2,901 | 4,905 | 19 | | | 19 | 8,905 | | | 62,263 | 79,012 | 90,766 |
| Depreciation and amortization | 17,566 | 20,330 | 1,640 | | | 1,814 | 87,444 | | | 50,857 | 179,651 | 210,962 |
| Stationery and office | 85,671 | 7,154 | 8,758 | 5,937 | | 3,330 | 3,973 | 66,038 | 2,383 | 47,228 | 230,472 | 199,912 |
| Office service and expense | 9,215 | 18,463 | 64,496 | 12,908 | | 19,006 | 7,299 | 66,038 | | 256,048 | 453,473 | 414,322 |
| Travel, meals and accommodations | 1,699 | 16,334 | 717,363 | 250,291 | | 99,628 | 10,478 | | 4,584 | 637,887 | 1,738,264 | 1,391,802 |
| Bad debts | | | | | | | | | | (3,608) | (3,608) | 15,236 |
| Delegate fees | | | (313,245) | (134,509) | | | | | | | (447,754) | (281,457) |
| **Total Operating Expenses** | 2,239,006 | 2,230,916 | 978,223 | 195,060 | 3,557 | 489,942 | 2,824,160 | 1,130,068 | 226,949 | 7,091,996 | 17,409,877 | 17,075,074 |
| Postretirement health benefits | | | | | | | | | | 26,631 | 26,631 | 53,126 |
| Retirement expense adjustment | | | | | | | | | | (616,634) | (616,634) | (561,817) |
| Capital projects depreciation | | | | | | | | | | 215,015 | 215,015 | 89,371 |
| **Total Expenses** | 2,239,006 | 2,230,916 | 978,223 | 195,060 | 3,557 | 489,942 | 2,824,160 | 1,130,068 | 226,949 | 6,717,008 | 17,034,889 | 16,655,754 |
| Allocation of supporting services to activities | 1,238,644 | 1,234,169 | 541,164 | 107,909 | 1,968 | 271,042 | 2,696,473 | 625,639 | - | (6,717,008) | - | - |
| **Total Allocated Expenses** | 3,477,650 | 3,465,085 | 1,519,387 | 302,969 | 5,525 | 760,984 | 5,520,633 | 1,755,707 | 226,949 | - | 17,034,889 | 16,655,754 |
| Services | $3,477,650 | $3,465,085 | $1,519,387 | $302,969 | $ 5,525 | $760,984 | | | | - | $9,531,600 | $9,210,179 |
| Publishing | - | - | - | - | - | - | $5,520,633 | | | | 5,520,633 | 5,489,840 |
| Grapevine | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | $1,755,707 | $226,949 | | 1,982,656 | 1,955,735 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | 17,034,889 | 16,655,754 |
| **COMPARATIVE TOTALS – 2015** | $3,194,720 | $3,417,525 | $1,659,606 | $ 13,786 | $318,798 | $605,744 | $5,489,840 | $1,736,117 | $219,618 | | $16,655,754 | |

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

# The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc.

# Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.
# Alcoholics Anonymous Grapevine, Inc.

## Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows

## Year Ended December 31, 2016
## (with comparative totals for 2015)

**CASH FLOWS PROVIDED (USED)**

| | 2016 | 2015 |
|---|---|---|
| **FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:** | | |
| Change in net assets for year (Exhibit B) | $2,199,653 | $2,505,954 |
| Realized and change in unrealized gains on investments | (189,880) | 67,074 |
| Amortization of bond premiums | – | 65 |
| Depreciation and amortization | 394,666 | 300,333 |
| Changes in assets and liabilities: | | |
| Accounts receivable | (121,279) | 17,329 |
| Inventories | 30,274 | 413,704 |
| Deferred charges and other assets | 14,329 | 1,038,047 |
| Accounts and accruals payable | 18,486 | 123,135 |
| Deferred income | (87,292) | (3,552,227) |
| Postretirement health benefits obligation | 481,903 | (66,992) |
| Accrued pension benefits | (812,714) | (2,146,483) |
| **Net Cash Flows Provided (used) by Operating Activities** | (1,928,146) | (1,300,061) |
| **FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:** | | |
| Purchases of property and equipment and software | (428,934) | (1,230,320) |
| Proceeds from sales of investments | 4,082,194 | 7,035,464 |
| Purchases of investments | (9,011,205) | (4,909,707) |
| **Net Cash Flows Provided by Investing Activities** | (5,357,945) | 895,437 |
| Net Increase (Decrease) in Cash | (3,429,799) | (404,624) |
| Cash, beginning of year | 8,459,658 | 8,864,282 |
| Cash, end of year | $5,029,859 | $8,459,658 |

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

# Report of the Independent Auditor

## Independent Auditor's Report

**April 4, 2017**

The Board of Trustees
The General Service Board of
Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc.
475 Riverside Drive
New York, New York 10115

Members of the Board:

We have audited the accompanying consolidated statement of financial position of THE GENERAL SERVICE BOARD OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, INC., ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS WORLD SERVICES, INC., and ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS GRAPEVINE, INC. as of December 31, 2016 and the related consolidated statements of activities, functional expenses and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Organizations' management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

***Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements***

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

***Auditor's Responsibility***

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

The prior year summarized comparative information has been derived from the Organization's December 31, 2015 consolidated financial statements, and in our report dated March 30, 2016, we expressed an unmodified opinion on those financial statements.

***Opinion***

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the three Corporations named above as of December 31, 2016 and the changes in their net assets and their cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

***Other Matter***

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements as a whole. The consolidating information presented in the consolidated statement of financial position is presented for purposes of additional analyses and is not a required part of the financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

Owen J. Flanagan and Company
Certified Public Accountants
New York, N.Y.

### THE GENERAL SERVICE BOARD OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, INC. ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS WORLD SERVICES, INC. ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS GRAPEVINE, INC. NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS DECEMBER 31, 2016

**Note 1 Organization:** The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc., ("G.S.B.") and its affiliates A.A. World Services, Inc. ("A.A.W.S.") and A.A. Grapevine, Inc. ("A.A.G.V.") are not-for-profit organizations organized for the purpose of assisting in the formation of A.A. Groups and coordinating the A.A. program of rehabilitating alcoholics throughout the world, and publishing books, magazines, pamphlets and other material directly related to that purpose. The trustees of G.S.B. are members ex officio of A.A.W.S. and A.A.G.V., and as such, elect their boards of directors. As members, they also have the sole right to amend the A.A.W.S. and A.A.G.V. bylaws, and approve their budgets.

The activities of the General Service Board of A.A. itself are conducted in five separate funds, as follows:

The RESERVE FUND — This fund was established in 1954 for the purpose of accumulating a prudent operating reserve, which during 1977, was redefined by a special General Service Board Committee as the prior year's combined operating expenses of A.A. World Services, Inc., A.A. Grapevine, Inc. and the General Fund of the A.A. General Service Board. The committee also recommended that all investment activities of the operating entities be consolidated into the Reserve Fund. That Advisory Action was approved by the Board of Trustees and since that time, all funds of the operating entities, in excess of those required for working capital, have been transferred to the Reserve Fund. Included in such transfers from A.A. Grapevine, Inc. have been amounts held for unfulfilled subscriptions reflected as a liability of the Reserve Fund. Any withdrawals from the Reserve Fund must be specifically authorized by the Board of Trustees upon recommendation of the Finance and Budgetary Committee.

The CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND — This fund accounts for the cost of leasehold improvements and computer hardware and software incurred under major capital projects, and records

annual depreciation on such assets.

The CONVENTION FUND — A separate fund established to record the direct income and expenses of international A.A. Conventions held every five years. These events are separate from the regular operations of the General Service Office, but the General Fund receives any excess of income, or pays any excess of expense, resulting from the activity.

From a historical perspective, the net direct result of all Conventions held to date is approximately an excess of income of $1,350,000, and presently resides with all other income not required for working capital in the Reserve Fund.

The POSTRETIREMENT MEDICAL FUND — A fund established in 2006 with the goal of accumulating assets equal to 50% of the liability for postretirement health benefits by the end of 2015. In 2016 a new goal was established to fund 100% of the liability by 2025.

The Postretirement health benefits plan is described in more detail in Note 5.

The GENERAL FUND — This fund is comprised of those assets not included in any of the other funds and may be used for any purpose for which the Organization was formed. These purposes presently include activities related to communication and information services to A.A. groups and members, public information, cooperation with the professional community and regional, national and international meetings, conferences and conventions.

All net assets of the Organizations are free of donor restrictions.

**Note 2 Accounting Policies:** The Organizations use the accrual method of accounting, where income is recorded in the period earned and expenses are recorded in the period incurred and to which they pertain. The Organizations do not receive or solicit pledges, so contributions are recorded as income when the cash is received.

The Organizations receive revenue from sales of literature and magazine subscriptions and donations from A.A. groups and members.

Contributions received from A.A. groups and members are for the general activities of the General Service Office, and are recorded as unrestricted. Donations received from foreign A.A. entities for the International Literature Fund are also treated as unrestricted, as A.A.'s ongoing foreign literature assistance program satisfies the donor's condition on a current basis.

Intercompany balances and transfers are eliminated in the consolidated totals in the accompanying financial statements.

Operating expenses of the General Service Office are shared between the General Service Board of A.A. and A.A. World Services. Expenses related to service activities are charged to the General Service Board, while expenses in connection with publishing activities are allocated to A.A. World Services. Administrative and overhead costs are apportioned between the program activities they support.

Occupancy costs related to A.A. Grapevine's share of office space at the General Service Office have been charged based on their allocated cost; substantially all other expenses related to magazine activities are paid and recorded directly by A.A. Grapevine under its separate accounting system.

**Cash:** For purposes of the consolidated statement of cash flows, cash is defined as cash on hand, checking and money market accounts and short term cash investments.

Cash in excess of federally insured limits are potentially exposed to concentrations of credit risk. However, the Organizations only maintain accounts with quality financial institutions with high credit standings, so as a consequence, such risks are limited.

**Accounts Receivable:** Receivables from sales of literature are recognized when items are shipped. Allowances for doubtful accounts are recorded based on the age and collectibility of the receivables.

Receivables are written off as a charge to bad debts when, in Management's estimation, it is probable that the receivable is worthless.

**Inventories:** Inventories are valued at the lower of cost or market using the first-in, first-out "FIFO" method of valuation. Proper allowance has been made for slow-moving or damaged merchandise.

Literature distributed without charge is not accounted for separately, but is included in the cost of printing as a reduction of inventory.

Shipping and handling charges billed to customers are included in sales revenue.

**Property and Equipment:** The costs of major capital projects involving leasehold improvements and computer system acquisitions are capitalized and depreciated on a straight line basis over the term of the applicable lease, or the useful life of the equipment, in the Capital Projects Fund.

Normal recurring expenditures for furniture and equipment are capitalized and depreciated over estimated useful lives of three to eight years.

The following table sets forth, by classification of assets, the depreciation lives, the provision for depreciation for the year ended December 31, 2016 and the accumulated depreciation at that date:

| | Life | Cost | Current Year | Accumulated Depreciation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Leasehold improvements 475 Riverside Drive | Terms of Leases | $3,971,178 | $170,378 | $2,932,631 |
| Furniture | 8 Years | 839,801 | 46,092 | 454,191 |
| Computers | 3 to 5 Years | 414,483 | 73,814 | 355,226 |
| Software | 5 Years | 1,562,673 | 104,382 | 1,272,502 |
| | | 6,788,135 | 394,666 | 5,014,550 |

**Investments:** Investments are recorded at fair value. Gains and losses on sales or redemptions are recorded by comparison of proceeds to amortized cost on a specific identification basis.

The Organizations follow Accounting Standards Codification ("ASC") 820, Fair Value Measurements. It establishes a framework for measuring fair value, and expands disclosures about fair value measurements. Investments are now classified into one of three categories.

Level 1 — Quoted prices are available in active markets for identical investments as of the reporting date.

Level 2 — Pricing inputs are other than quoted prices in active markets, which are either directly or indirectly observable as of the reporting date, and the fair value is determined through the use of models or other valuation methodologies.

Level 3 — Pricing inputs are unobservable for the investment and include situations where there is little, if any, market activity for the investment.

All of the securities held by the Organizations at December 31, 2016 and 2015 have been valued at either Level 1 or Level 2.

Level 2 investments have been valued using the net asset values as reported by the mutual funds.

As described above, all funds of the operating entities not required for working capital are consolidated in the Reserve Fund of the General Service Board. In accordance with established policy, the Reserve Fund invests in certificates of deposit.

The Postretirement Medical Fund holds investments designed to assist in reaching the stated goal of accumulating assets equal to 100% of the accrued postretirement health benefits by December 31, 2025. This fund invests in bond and equity mutual funds.

At December 31, 2016, investments were comprised as follows:

| | Cost | Fair Value | Level 1 | Level 2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reserve Fund | | | | |
| Certificates of deposit | $15,331,170 | $15,331,170 | $15,331,170 | $ - |
| Postretirement Medical Fund | | | | |
| Bond funds | 1,377,347 | 1,352,402 | - | 1,352,402 |
| Equity funds | | | | |
| Small Cap Index | 170,676 | 207,115 | - | 207,115 |
| Mid Cap Index | 166,561 | 195,213 | - | 195,213 |
| S&P 500 Index | 1,413,708 | 1,661,050 | - | 1,661,050 |
| International Index | 437,319 | 417,174 | - | 417,174 |
| | 3,565,611 | 3,832,954 | - | 3,832,954 |
| Totals | 18,896,781 | 19,164,124 | 15,331,170 | 3,832,954 |

Investment income for 2016 and 2015 is comprised of the following:

| | 2016 | 2015 |
|---|---|---|
| Interest and dividends | $223,880 | $146,837 |
| Realized gains | - | 7,031 |
| Change in unrealized appreciation | 189,880 | (74,105) |
| Investment expenses | (31,036) | (30,006) |
| | 382,724 | 49,757 |

**Functional Expenses:** The consolidated statement of Functional Expenses (Exhibit C) provides detail as to program costs by major activity and supporting services. In addition to the program costs reflected on that Exhibit, amounts shown on the consolidated statement of Activities (Exhibit B) as cost of literature distributed also relate to the publishing and magazine programs.

Two of the major program activities described on Exhibit C are for "Group Services" and "Fellowship Services." Group Services includes those activities most closely associated with serving A.A. groups, including staff services, the *Box 4-5-9* newsletter, directories, group records and files, the Contributions Department and services to French- and Spanish-speaking groups in North America. Fellowship Services include activities outside of the group, such as public information, cooperation with the professional community, treatment and correctional facilities, archives and loners and overseas services.

Supporting services include costs of the General Service Office, which cannot be attributed to any specific program activity. These include administrative management, data processing and information systems, editorial and clerical support, trustee and director activities, copy center, accounting, human resources and miscellaneous administrative functions.

The allocation of supporting services to program activities on Exhibit C is done on a pro rata basis to program expenses by entity, and is provided for informational purposes only.

Fundraising costs are immaterial.

**Operating Expenses:** For purposes of the statement of Functional Expenses, operating expenses are defined as recurring items requiring the current outlay of cash.

**Management Estimates:** The management of the Organizations use estimates and assumptions in preparing financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. These estimates and assumptions affect the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses. Actual results could vary from the estimates that management uses.

As described in Note 5 of this report, management made certain significant estimates in the calculation of liabilities for postretirement health benefits. These estimates include employee retention, health care cost trends and the actuarial lives of present and projected retirees eligible for benefits. It is reasonably possible that changes in these estimates will occur in the near term. The effect of changes in these estimates cannot be determined.

**Subsequent Events:** In connection with the preparation of these consolidated financial statements, management evaluated subsequent events after the balance sheet date of December 31, 2016 through April 4, 2017, which was the date the financial statements were able to be issued.

**Note 3 Retirement Plan:** The Organizations adopted a defined benefit pension plan effective January 1, 1965 to provide retirement benefits to eligible U.S. employees who have completed one year of service.

The plan provides an annual benefit equal to 2% of final average compensation multiplied by years of service (not to exceed 35 years), less 0.65% of average social security earnings multiplied by years of service (not to exceed 30 years). The social security offset cannot reduce the gross benefit by more than 50%.

Pension expense is recorded in accordance with ASC 715 under which costs are accrued ratably over an employee's years

of service based upon factors that are not necessarily the same as those used to calculate the annual funding requirements. In addition, ASC 715 requires an employer to report an asset or liability on the Organization's balance sheet depending upon a comparison of the Plan's assets to its benefit obligations.

The contributions made to fund pension benefits are recorded by the operating companies as an expense. The difference between the amounts actually paid and the net periodic pension cost under ASC 715 is recorded as an adjustment to retirement expense as a non-cash item that does not affect current operations.

The following tables set forth the Plan's funded status, assumptions, benefit cost and payments and employer contributions for 2016:

| | |
|---|---|
| Fair value of plan assets (at December 31) | $ 29,912,386 |
| Benefit obligation (at December 31) | 35,158,955 |
| Funded status | (5,246,569) |
| Accrued pension cost recognized in consolidated statement of financial position | $ 5,246,569 |
| Accumulated benefit obligation | $ 31,688,077 |
| Benefit cost | 950,466 |
| Employers' contributions | 1,567,100 |
| Benefits paid | 1,533,943 |
| Classification of benefit costs: | |
| Operating expense (cash funding) | $ 1,567,100 |
| Non-operating expense (non-cash adjustment to pension cost) | (616,634) |
| | 950,466 |
| Weighted — Average Assumptions used to determine benefit obligations at December 31, 2016: | |
| Discount rate | 4.05% |
| Salary increases | 3.0% |
| Expected long-term return on assets | 7.0% |
| Weighted — Average Assumptions used to determine net periodic pension cost for year ended December 31, 2016: | |
| Discount rate | 4.26% |
| Salary increases | 3.0% |
| Expected long-term return on assets | 7.5% |

The expected rate of return on plan assets is determined by those assets' historical long-term investment performance, current asset allocation, and estimates of future long-term returns by asset class.

The fair value of plan assets at December 31, 2016 were composed as follows:

| | Total | Level 1 | Level 2 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cash and equivalents | $ 1,293,206 | $1,293,206 | $ - |
| Domestic equity mutual funds | 16,997,252 | | 16,997,252 |
| International equity mutual fund | 2,876,774 | | 2,876,774 |
| Bond mutual funds | 8,745,154 | | 8,745,154 |
| | 29,912,386 | 1,293,206 | 28,619,180 |

The mutual funds in the plan are primarily index funds designed to achieve diversification between fixed income and equity investments among asset classes including S&P 500, small capitalization companies and international stocks.

The expected benefits to be paid for the next ten years are as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| 2017 | $ 1,732,443 |
| 2018 | 1,762,758 |
| 2019 | 1,762,301 |
| 2020 | 1,780,852 |
| 2021 | 1,815,951 |
| 2022 – 2026 | 10,044,818 |

The employers' contributions for 2017 are expected to be $1,500,000.

Effective January 1, 2013, the Corporations implemented a "soft freeze" of the defined benefit pension plan. Employees in the plan as of December 31, 2012, continue to accrue benefits; however, employees hired after that date participate instead in a new defined contribution plan. The contribution rate is 5% plus a 50% match on employee contributions up to 5%. Therefore, the maximum combined rate is 7.5%. The 2016 pension cost was $108,944.

**Note 4 Lease Commitments:** At December 31, 2016, A.A.W.S. as fiscal agent for the G.S.B. and the A.A. Grapevine, Inc. was subject to the following noncancellable leases (exclusive of future operating increases) for office space at 475 Riverside Drive in New York City:

$789,812 annual lease through December 31, 2025 for space on the 11th floor; future minimum rental payments due under the leases are as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| 2017 | $ 789,812 |
| 2018 | 789,812 |
| 2019 | 789,812 |
| 2020 | 789,812 |
| 2021 | 789,812 |
| 2022 – 2025 | 3,159,248 |
| | 7,108,308 |

**Note 5 Postretirement Health Benefits:** The Organizations provide health care benefits for retired employees, substantially all of whom become eligible if they attain retirement age while working at the General Service Office. Benefits are provided through health insurance contracts maintained by the Corporations. For employees hired before 2004, 25% of the cost is borne by the retirees.

For employees hired after January 1, 2004 through June 30, 2016, there is a three-tier structure in the level of group medical insurance premiums paid for on behalf of employees who retire directly from G.S.O. For employees with 5-9 years of service, the Organizations pay 25%, 10-15 years 50% and more than 15 years 75%.

In March 2016 the Organizations decided to no longer provide healthcare benefits upon retirement for employees hired after June 30, 2016.

The assumed health care cost trend rate used to measure the expected cost of benefits covered by the plan is 6.0%. A discount rate of 4.05% has been used to measure the accrued postretirement health benefit obligation shown on Exhibit B at December 31, 2016. The discount rate was 4.26% at December 31, 2015.

Prior to 2006, the Plan was unfunded. However, as described in Note 1, a Postretirement Medical Fund has been created by the Board with the purpose of accumulating assets equal to fund the postretirement health benefits liability. As of December 31, 2016, the Fund's assets were equal to 50.7% of the benefit obligation.

The following table sets forth information regarding the Plan for 2016:

| | |
|---|---|
| Benefit obligation (at December 31) | $7,668,760 |
| Benefits paid | $ 290,292 |
| Benefit cost | $ 567,923 |
| Benefit cost reported by: | |
| Operating entities | $ 541,292 |
| Postretirement Medical Fund | $ 26,631 |
| | $ 567,923 |

The expected postretirement benefits to be paid for the next ten years are as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| 2017 | $ 307,710 |
| 2018 | 326,173 |
| 2019 | 345,743 |
| 2020 | 366,488 |
| 2021 | 388,477 |
| 2022 – 2026 | 2,321,277 |

**Note 6 Tax Status:** The Organizations are exempt from Federal income taxes under section 501(a) as further described in 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and are classified as public charities. They are also exempt from New York State franchise and sales taxes.

# The General Service Office
# 2017 OPERATING BUDGET

| INCOME | 2016 Budget | 2016 Actual | 2017 Budget |
|---|---|---|---|
| **GROSS SALES** | $13,707,484 | $13,413,929 | $13,750,000 |
| Discounts Allowed | 235,000 | 224,670 | 235,000 |
| Net Sales | 13,472,484 | 13,189,259 | 13,515,000 |
| Cost of Literature Distributed | | | |
| Manufacturing | 2,710,000 | 2,639,943 | 2,887,500 |
| Royalties | - | - | - |
| Gross Margin | 10,762,484 | 10,549,316 | 10,627,500 |
| **DIRECT SHIPPING AND WAREHOUSING** | 1,755,100 | 1,604,188 | 1,816,950 |
| Gross Profit from Literature | 9,007,384 | 8,945,128 | 8,810,550 |
| | 66.86% | 67.82% | 65.19% |
| Contributions Received | 7,100,000 | 7,934,869 | 7,675,000 |
| Interest Income | 400 | 443 | 400 |
| Total Revenue | 16,107,784 | 16,880,440 | 16,485,950 |
| **OPERATING EXPENSES** | | | |
| Salaries | 6,543,000 | 6,110,119 | 6,875,000 |
| Payroll taxes | 486,000 | 451,750 | 495,000 |
| Insurance | 1,259,800 | 1,137,358 | 1,251,800 |
| Retirement expense | 1,793,500 | 1,801,840 | 1,837,002 |
| Other program printing | 386,500 | 393,490 | 396,500 |
| Mailing, labor, etc. | 125,800 | 105,722 | 128,000 |
| Postage & express | 364,500 | 334,774 | 385,800 |
| Writers' fees | 161,500 | 82,932 | 235,500 |
| Other literature assistance | 50,000 | 17,332 | 40,000 |
| Selling expenses | 426,250 | 436,892 | 461,650 |
| Professional fees | 153,000 | 201,995 | 168,000 |
| Contracted services | 1,230,000 | 1,452,142 | 1,008,500 |
| Occupancy | 807,500 | 805,919 | 916,400 |
| Telephone | 104,200 | 114,294 | 119,850 |
| Equipment maintenance | 81,800 | 59,475 | 72,421 |
| Furniture & equipment | 167,500 | 175,682 | 140,000 |
| Stationery & office expense | 205,000 | 162,051 | 195,600 |
| Office service & expense | 386,425 | 352,165 | 348,429 |
| Travel, meals & accommodations | 1,399,700 | 1,236,997 | 1,010,200 |
| Bad debts | 2,500 | (5,709) | 2,500 |
| *TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES* | 16,134,475 | 15,427,220 | 16,088,152 |
| **INCOME (LOSS) FOR PERIOD** | $ (26,691) | $ 1,453,220 | $ 397,798 |

# Alcoholics Anonymous Grapevine, Inc.
# 2017 BUDGET

| | GRAPEVINE | | | LA VIÑA | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2016 Budget | 2016 Actual | 2017 Budget | 2016 Budget | 2016 Actual | 2017 Budget |
| **PAID CIRCULATION—** | | | | | | |
| **AVERAGE # OF Print COPIES** | 70,369 | 71,811 | 68,592 | 10,017 | 10,374 | 9,579 |
| Online Circulation | 5,097 | 5,030 | 5,251 | | | |
| GV Subscription App | 144 | 588 | 360 | | | |
| **INCOME FROM CONTENT PRODUCTION** | | | | | | |
| Subscription income | $1,907,710 | $1,916,395 | $1,830,482 | $110,314 | $111,457 | $102,921 |
| Single copies and back issues | 31,497 | 34,359 | 30,923 | 8,996 | 8,424 | 7,582 |
| GV Online | 154,159 | 144,733 | 151,102 | | | |
| GV Subscription App | 2,592 | 7,854 | 4,812 | | | |
| Books | 475,833 | 584,144 | 594,613 | 17,559 | 28,131 | 23,580 |
| Content Related Items | 101,354 | 107,969 | 94,708 | 4,425 | 4,764 | 4,049 |
| **Total income** | 2,673,145 | 2,795,455 | 2,706,641 | 141,294 | 152,776 | 138,131 |
| **DIRECT COSTS FROM CONTENT PRODUCTION** | | | | | | |
| Magazine Costs | 708,254 | 653,134 | 659,603 | 57,761 | 67,140 | 63,858 |
| GV Online | 25,175 | 21,450 | 23,066 | | | |
| GV Subscription App | 0 | 2,392 | 4,800 | | | |
| Books/Content Related Items | 222,533 | 233,805 | 219,666 | 5,452 | 10,769 | 9,029 |
| **Total direct costs** | 955,962 | 910,781 | 907,135 | 63,213 | 77,909 | 72,887 |
| **GROSS PROFIT ON CONTENT PRODUCTION** | 1,717,182 | 1,884,674 | 1,799,506 | 78,081 | 74,867 | 65,244 |
| **COSTS AND EXPENSES** | | | | | | |
| **EDITORIAL COSTS** | | | | | | |
| Salaries, including temporary help | 435,170 | 388,446 | 420,448 | 93,831 | 96,610 | 96,485 |
| Payroll taxes and benefits | 164,114 | 136,294 | 169,854 | 35,281 | 34,420 | 37,226 |
| Occupancy costs | 44,540 | 42,058 | 43,320 | | | |
| Office supplies and expenses | 25,935 | 29,729 | 30,621 | 1,378 | 2,383 | 2,454 |
| Product development & web | 85,000 | 88,476 | 85,000 | | | |
| Total Editorial | 754,759 | 685,002 | 749,242 | 130,490 | 133,413 | 136,165 |
| **CIRCULATION AND BUSINESS** | | | | | | |
| Salaries, including temporary help | 312,221 | 304,854 | 318,817 | 50,640 | 50,368 | 50,624 |
| Payroll taxes and benefits | 221,176 | 242,777 | 274,883 | 19,273 | 19,172 | 24,146 |
| Fulfillment | 155,363 | 142,837 | 147,121 | 8,530 | 7,831 | 8,066 |
| Occupancy costs | 44,179 | 42,365 | 43,636 | | | |
| Office supplies and expenses | 98,094 | 102,347 | 105,417 | | | |
| Selling expense - regular | 65,582 | 48,398 | 50,766 | 13,093 | 9,067 | 9,339 |
| - Outreach/Rep Program | 11,109 | 11,667 | 28,017 | | | |
| Postage | 5,122 | 7,373 | 7,594 | | | |
| Total Circulation and Business | 912,846 | 902,617 | 976,252 | 91,536 | 86,437 | 92,174 |
| **GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE** | | | | | | |
| Computer Consulting | 30,000 | 19,537 | 30,000 | | | |
| Insurance | 9,390 | 8,887 | 9,242 | | | |
| Professional fees | 60,000 | 58,282 | 60,000 | | 2,515 | |
| Meetings and conferences | 47,697 | 48,928 | 50,395 | 7,705 | 4,584 | 4,721 |
| Furniture and equipment | 15,000 | 3,969 | 15,000 | | | |
| Canadian exchange and other | 9,837 | 9,724 | 10,016 | | | |
| Bank service charges | 18,418 | 16,658 | 18,418 | | | |
| Bad debts | 10,000 | 2,101 | 10,000 | | | |
| Total General and Administrative | 200,342 | 168,085 | 203,071 | 7,705 | 7,099 | 4,721 |
| **TOTAL COSTS AND EXPENSES** | 1,867,947 | 1,755,705 | 1,928,565 | 229,732 | 226,949 | 233,060 |
| Add: Interest earned | 4,700 | 15,100 | 15,100 | | | |
| Support from GSB General Fund | | | | 151,651 | 152,082 | 167,816 |
| **NET INCOME (LOSS) FOR PERIOD** | ($146,064) | $144,069 | ($113,960) | $0 | $0 | $0 |

## 2016 Contributions From Groups, Individuals, Specials, Special Meetings — by Delegate Area *(in U.S. Dollars)*

| AREA # | GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE AREA | #GPS. REPORTED | #GPS. CONTRIB. | % OF GPS. CONTRIB. | TOTAL GROUP CONTRIB. | MEMBERSHIP | CONTRIBUTION PER CAPITA | INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS | MEMORIAL | SPECIALS[1] | SPECIAL MEETINGS[2] | TOTAL AREA CONTRIBUTIONS | PER CAPITA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Alabama/N.W. Florida | 451 | 191 | 42.4% | $42,017.00 | 9,380 | $4.48 | $1,286.61 | $3,000.00 | $492.55 | $50.00 | $46,846.16 | $4.99 |
| 2. | Alaska | 185 | 90 | 48.6 | 30,195.27 | 3,092 | 9.77 | 1,599.97 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 136.34 | 31,931.58 | 10.33 |
| 3. | Arizona | 1,000 | 460 | 46.0 | 136,165.41 | 22,843 | 5.96 | 11,222.10 | 0.00 | 7,953.60 | 450.00 | 155,791.11 | 6.82 |
| 4. | Arkansas | 261 | 116 | 44.4 | 26,675.59 | 4,448 | 6.00 | 1,207.27 | 5,000.00 | 2,714.84 | 0.00 | 35,597.70 | 8.00 |
| | **California** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. | Southern | 1,431 | 436 | 30.5 | 112,659.08 | 47,064 | 2.39 | 19,375.23 | 25.00 | 2,813.38 | 1,062.20 | 135,934.89 | 2.89 |
| 6. | N. Coastal | 2,084 | 1,142 | 54.8 | 338,463.67 | 60,031 | 5.64 | 50,268.36 | 5,500.00 | 16,346.48 | 638.50 | 411,217.01 | 6.85 |
| 7. | N. Interior | 1,058 | 442 | 41.8 | 105,296.60 | 29,214 | 3.60 | 17,666.02 | 3,078.00 | 3,639.48 | 0.00 | 129,680.10 | 4.44 |
| 8. | San Diego/Imperial | 1,098 | 438 | 39.9 | 95,117.96 | 28,346 | 3.36 | 12,094.77 | 1,000.00 | 2,784.36 | 354.62 | 111,351.71 | 3.93 |
| 9. | Mid-Southern | 2,126 | 865 | 40.7 | 206,094.09 | 62,346 | 3.31 | 21,725.79 | 555.00 | 10,109.00 | 1,700.53 | 240,184.41 | 3.85 |
| 10. | Colorado | 897 | 440 | 49.1 | 112,891.28 | 19,918 | 5.67 | 19,723.01 | 2,050.00 | 9,087.44 | 0.00 | 143,751.73 | 7.22 |
| 11. | Connecticut | 1,451 | 605 | 41.7 | 148,099.82 | 32,606 | 4.54 | 16,579.96 | 510.00 | 25,628.80 | 483.26 | 191,301.84 | 5.87 |
| 12. | Delaware | 264 | 140 | 53.0 | 45,279.03 | 3,977 | 11.39 | 2,628.58 | 0.00 | 60.00 | 0.00 | 47,967.61 | 12.06 |
| 13. | District Of Columbia | 518 | 196 | 37.8 | 53,013.86 | 14,326 | 3.70 | 3,624.17 | 100.00 | 0.00 | 231.00 | 56,969.03 | 3.98 |
| | **Florida** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 14. | North | 987 | 427 | 43.3 | 141,122.44 | 19,332 | 7.30 | 22,821.51 | 0.00 | 15,085.90 | 450.00 | 179,479.85 | 9.28 |
| 15. | So. Florida/Bahamas/ US V.I./Antigua | 2,216 | 929 | 41.9 | 233,048.14 | 42,188 | 5.52 | 22,642.85 | 13,110.00 | 110,711.47 | 650.00 | 380,162.46 | 9.01 |
| 16. | Georgia | 776 | 456 | 58.8 | 125,925.73 | 19,420 | 6.48 | 8,154.50 | 25.00 | 9,313.96 | 150.00 | 143,569.19 | 7.39 |
| 17. | Hawaii | 326 | 161 | 49.4 | 39,124.46 | 5,458 | 7.17 | 1,713.60 | 0.00 | 334.40 | 0.00 | 41,172.46 | 7.54 |
| 18. | Idaho | 268 | 109 | 40.7 | 25,184.22 | 4,707 | 5.35 | 1,214.08 | 0.00 | 1,955.38 | 85.88 | 28,439.56 | 6.04 |
| | **Illinois** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 19. | Chicago | 1,313 | 320 | 24.4 | 74,477.90 | 25,865 | 2.88 | 9,183.14 | 209.00 | 3,841.95 | 592.45 | 88,304.44 | 3.41 |
| 20. | Northern | 1,309 | 462 | 35.3 | 74,691.83 | 23,245 | 3.21 | 8,634.31 | 885.00 | 36,616.61 | 367.50 | 121,195.25 | 5.21 |
| 21. | Southern | 446 | 168 | 37.7 | 30,395.27 | 7,413 | 4.10 | 2,280.00 | 0.00 | 202.18 | 0.00 | 32,877.45 | 4.44 |
| | **Indiana** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 22. | Northern | 665 | 243 | 36.5 | 45,069.28 | 9,527 | 4.73 | 2,413.05 | 85.00 | 1,441.51 | 0.00 | 49,008.84 | 5.14 |
| 23. | Southern | 691 | 308 | 44.6 | 45,694.40 | 11,834 | 3.86 | 5,646.30 | 43.00 | 6,348.98 | 115.60 | 57,848.28 | 4.89 |
| 24. | Iowa | 702 | 303 | 43.2 | 69,025.14 | 14,453 | 4.78 | 888.14 | 5,000.00 | 650.00 | 986.75 | 76,550.03 | 5.30 |
| 25. | Kansas | 349 | 155 | 44.4 | 34,194.57 | 8,664 | 3.95 | 3,802.98 | 100.00 | 2,787.85 | 0.00 | 40,885.40 | 4.72 |
| 26. | Kentucky | 798 | 323 | 40.5 | 78,162.11 | 13,021 | 6.00 | 8,511.05 | 1,100.00 | 5,956.39 | 0.00 | 93,729.55 | 7.20 |
| 27. | Louisiana | 625 | 191 | 30.6 | 52,196.05 | 11,451 | 4.56 | 992.50 | 0.00 | 1,599.73 | 0.00 | 54,788.28 | 4.78 |
| 28. | Maine | 563 | 191 | 33.9 | 27,594.80 | 8,595 | 3.21 | 5,301.00 | 0.00 | 5,147.00 | 681.04 | 38,723.84 | 4.51 |
| 29. | Maryland | 990 | 430 | 43.4 | 99,862.67 | 14,692 | 6.80 | 10,825.82 | 3,202.00 | 218.22 | 60.30 | 114,169.01 | 7.77 |
| | **Massachusetts** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 30. | Eastern | 1,550 | 555 | 35.8 | 140,972.67 | 46,737 | 3.02 | 18,938.05 | 50.00 | 1,233.95 | 425.00 | 161,619.67 | 3.46 |
| 31. | Western | 320 | 154 | 48.1 | 25,846.76 | 5,301 | 4.88 | 4,307.93 | 0.00 | 2,000.00 | 0.00 | 32,154.69 | 6.07 |
| | **Michigan** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 32. | Central | 725 | 262 | 36.1 | 40,988.26 | 15,398 | 2.66 | 7,520.48 | 175.69 | 2,987.70 | 0.00 | 51,672.13 | 3.36 |
| 33. | Southeastern | 989 | 283 | 28.6 | 58,560.01 | 20,669 | 2.83 | 2,277.11 | 0.00 | 50.00 | 0.00 | 60,887.12 | 2.95 |
| 34. | Western | 638 | 215 | 33.7 | 47,847.50 | 12,632 | 3.79 | 1,623.45 | 0.00 | 4,227.54 | 19.22 | 53,717.71 | 4.25 |
| | **Minnesota** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 35. | Northern | 571 | 264 | 46.2 | 35,437.80 | 8,420 | 4.21 | 961.46 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 100.00 | 36,499.26 | 4.33 |
| 36. | Southern | 1,211 | 429 | 35.4 | 104,466.53 | 28,967 | 3.61 | 7,738.06 | 3,050.00 | 8,909.56 | 63.00 | 124,227.15 | 4.29 |
| 37. | Mississippi | 220 | 76 | 34.5 | 16,926.26 | 4,472 | 3.78 | 1,583.13 | 0.00 | 835.00 | 0.00 | 19,344.39 | 4.33 |
| | **Missouri** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 38. | Eastern | 608 | 253 | 41.6 | 66,187.02 | 9,579 | 6.91 | 5,442.17 | 100.00 | 4,290.90 | 71.40 | 76,091.49 | 7.94 |
| 39. | Western | 228 | 112 | 49.1 | 26,463.69 | 6,646 | 3.98 | 255.65 | 0.00 | 1,075.00 | 0.00 | 27,794.34 | 4.18 |
| 40. | Montana | 259 | 124 | 47.9 | 38,236.87 | 5,188 | 7.37 | 1,268.00 | 0.00 | 4,802.57 | 0.00 | 44,307.44 | 8.54 |
| 41. | Nebraska | 687 | 261 | 38.0 | 46,556.85 | 14,874 | 3.13 | 1,814.06 | 0.00 | 759.97 | 150.00 | 49,280.88 | 3.31 |
| 42. | Nevada | 649 | 209 | 32.2 | 45,887.66 | 14,030 | 3.27 | 5,912.08 | 0.00 | 2,696.02 | 0.00 | 54,495.76 | 3.88 |
| 43. | New Hampshire | 646 | 268 | 41.5 | 49,236.08 | 9,235 | 5.33 | 6,342.86 | 25.00 | 6,860.00 | 0.00 | 62,463.94 | 6.76 |
| | **New Jersey** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 44. | Northern | 1,359 | 588 | 43.3 | 165,261.36 | 32,228 | 5.13 | 12,881.49 | 0.00 | 1,635.60 | 535.00 | 180,313.45 | 5.59 |
| 45. | Southern | 572 | 279 | 48.8 | 76,784.14 | 9,176 | 8.37 | 4,839.66 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 617.00 | 82,240.80 | 8.96 |
| 46. | New Mexico | 373 | 165 | 44.2 | 32,968.35 | 7,018 | 4.70 | 3,077.07 | 0.00 | 489.52 | 0.00 | 36,534.94 | 5.21 |
| | **New York** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 47. | Central | 746 | 272 | 36.5 | 54,751.17 | 10,009 | 5.47 | 4,314.23 | 1,069.00 | 1,248.46 | 6.00 | 61,388.86 | 6.13 |
| 48. | H./M./B. | 766 | 320 | 41.8 | 47,576.18 | 11,120 | 4.28 | 4,351.10 | 0.00 | 6,211.88 | 0.00 | 58,139.16 | 5.23 |
| 49. | Southeast | 1,864 | 731 | 39.2 | 293,262.58 | 55,467 | 5.29 | 23,616.26 | 1,350.00 | 9,169.78 | 833.75 | 328,232.37 | 5.92 |
| 50. | Western | 314 | 103 | 32.8 | 21,662.74 | 4,947 | 4.38 | 318.00 | 0.00 | 550.00 | 0.00 | 22,530.74 | 4.55 |
| 51. | North Carolina | 1,128 | 563 | 49.9 | 165,080.79 | 19,245 | 8.58 | 15,286.75 | 100.00 | 18,695.50 | 560.00 | 199,723.04 | 10.38 |
| 52. | North Dakota | 165 | 82 | 49.7 | 22,060.57 | 3,159 | 6.98 | 347.00 | 0.00 | 4,065.46 | 0.00 | 26,473.03 | 8.38 |
| | **Ohio** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 53. | Central & Southeast | 871 | 230 | 26.4 | 31,333.97 | 10,096 | 3.10 | 7,803.50 | 1,000.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 40,137.47 | 3.98 |
| 54. | Northeast | 1,600 | 348 | 21.8 | 46,052.06 | 18,915 | 2.43 | 2,673.50 | 5,125.00 | 3,406.58 | 250.00 | 57,507.14 | 3.04 |
| 55. | Northwest | 314 | 99 | 31.5 | 13,398.44 | 4,061 | 3.30 | 564.00 | 0.00 | 1,271.65 | 0.00 | 15,234.09 | 3.75 |
| 56. | Southwest | 546 | 263 | 48.2 | 50,342.83 | 9,394 | 5.36 | 5,774.60 | 0.00 | 303.85 | 0.00 | 56,421.28 | 6.01 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 57. | Oklahoma | 397 | 166 | 41.8 | 38,137.97 | 8,622 | 4.42 | 516.00 | 0.00 | 58.00 | 0.00 | 38,711.97 | 4.49 |
| 58. | Oregon | 1,270 | 499 | 39.3 | 117,906.05 | 22,879 | 5.15 | 12,089.30 | 0.00 | 7,531.36 | 1,211.08 | 138,737.79 | 6.06 |
| | **Pennsylvania** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 59. | Eastern | 1,640 | 807 | 49.2 | 203,091.92 | 32,227 | 6.30 | 14,487.78 | 5,379.42 | 7,027.45 | 35.00 | 230,021.57 | 7.14 |
| 60. | Western | 846 | 373 | 44.1 | 65,087.37 | 10,838 | 6.01 | 8,917.39 | 5,000.00 | 2,083.60 | 0.00 | 81,088.36 | 7.48 |
| 61. | Rhode Island | 278 | 118 | 42.4 | 27,101.68 | 5,487 | 4.94 | 2,591.40 | 0.00 | 3,260.98 | 0.00 | 32,954.06 | 6.01 |
| 62. | South Carolina | 394 | 204 | 51.8 | 72,745.21 | 9,415 | 7.73 | 5,753.17 | 0.00 | 5,140.85 | 0.00 | 83,639.23 | 8.88 |
| 63. | South Dakota | 188 | 66 | 35.1 | 13,026.52 | 4,717 | 2.76 | 287.00 | 0.00 | 1,768.47 | 0.00 | 15,081.99 | 3.20 |
| 64. | Tennessee | 601 | 245 | 40.8 | 60,150.46 | 12,555 | 4.79 | 1,495.50 | 400.00 | 2,223.75 | 0.00 | 64,269.71 | 5.12 |
| | **Texas** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 65. | Northeast | 475 | 186 | 39.2 | 105,971.84 | 17,440 | 6.08 | 4,743.44 | 0.00 | 7,757.86 | 393.00 | 118,866.14 | 6.82 |
| 66. | Northwest | 263 | 63 | 24.0 | 15,828.25 | 5,152 | 3.07 | 862.49 | 50.00 | 2,395.24 | 0.00 | 19,135.98 | 3.71 |
| 67. | Southeast | 688 | 275 | 40.0 | 81,105.36 | 16,748 | 4.84 | 12,718.74 | 5,037.00 | 2,118.30 | 47.18 | 101,026.58 | 6.03 |
| 68. | Southwest | 623 | 263 | 42.2 | 104,213.03 | 15,569 | 6.69 | 10,159.94 | 220.00 | 6,132.90 | 353.21 | 121,079.08 | 7.78 |
| 69. | Utah | 402 | 172 | 42.8 | 39,496.51 | 7,215 | 5.47 | 2,710.29 | 0.00 | 1,676.67 | 275.00 | 44,158.47 | 6.12 |
| 70. | Vermont | 304 | 146 | 48.0 | 31,526.53 | 4,968 | 6.35 | 3,016.98 | 0.00 | 2,693.89 | 40.00 | 37,277.40 | 7.50 |
| 71. | Virginia | 1,557 | 722 | 46.4 | 187,764.98 | 26,297 | 7.14 | 24,351.74 | 2,045.00 | 16,424.96 | 723.38 | 231,310.06 | 8.80 |
| 72. | Western Washington | 1,551 | 631 | 40.7 | 162,048.16 | 31,211 | 5.19 | 24,390.18 | 0.00 | 29,065.32 | 518.86 | 216,022.52 | 6.92 |
| 73. | West Virginia | 278 | 115 | 41.4 | 16,463.34 | 2,870 | 5.74 | 316.00 | 0.00 | 2,898.22 | 0.00 | 19,677.56 | 6.86 |
| | **Wisconsin** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 74. | N. Wisc./Upper Peni. Mich. | 769 | 292 | 38.0 | 32,707.17 | 10,930 | 2.99 | 825.04 | 0.00 | 100.00 | 0.00 | 33,632.21 | 3.08 |
| 75. | Southern | 1,097 | 459 | 41.8 | 67,240.61 | 19,003 | 3.54 | 4,751.10 | 5,000.00 | 941.24 | 0.00 | 77,932.95 | 4.10 |
| 76. | Wyoming | 127 | 52 | 40.9 | 16,545.93 | 1,982 | 8.35 | 586.10 | 0.00 | 2,733.00 | 0.00 | 19,865.03 | 10.02 |
| 77. | Puerto Rico | 125 | 62 | 49.6 | 7,108.65 | 1,214 | 5.86 | 98.00 | 0.00 | 987.97 | 0.00 | 8,194.62 | 6.75 |
| 78. | Alberta/N.W.T. | 556 | 238 | 42.8 | 64,197.29 | 9,575 | 6.70 | 494.72 | 0.00 | 4,670.34 | 134.45 | 69,496.80 | 7.26 |
| 79. | B.C./Yukon Canada | 815 | 407 | 49.9 | 112,770.83 | 15,021 | 7.51 | 1,742.01 | 0.00 | 5,614.20 | 261.19 | 120,388.23 | 8.01 |
| 80. | Manitoba Canada | 154 | 43 | 27.9 | 12,565.52 | 3,856 | 3.26 | 171.55 | 0.00 | 127.03 | 0.00 | 12,864.10 | 3.34 |
| 81. | N.B./P.E.I. | 183 | 89 | 48.6 | 14,077.47 | 2,856 | 4.93 | 516.61 | 0.00 | 3,588.61 | 0.00 | 18,182.69 | 6.37 |
| 82. | N.S./Nfld/Lab. | 252 | 105 | 41.7 | 21,756.82 | 3,236 | 6.72 | 36.36 | 0.00 | 5,723.82 | 0.00 | 27,517.00 | 8.50 |
| | **Ontario** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 83. | Eastern | 569 | 254 | 44.6 | 63,480.01 | 13,956 | 4.55 | 2,787.27 | 76.16 | 7,073.89 | 103.71 | 73,521.04 | 5.27 |
| 84. | Northeast | 170 | 68 | 40.0 | 14,299.21 | 1,819 | 7.86 | 101.16 | 0.00 | 3,075.96 | 0.00 | 17,476.33 | 9.61 |
| 85. | Northwest | 59 | 15 | 25.4 | 3,913.98 | 1,005 | 3.89 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1,917.08 | 0.00 | 5,831.06 | 5.80 |
| 86. | Western | 604 | 268 | 44.4 | 69,706.08 | 10,019 | 6.96 | 1,856.75 | 2,581.08 | 15,168.38 | 392.42 | 89,704.71 | 8.95 |
| | **Quebec** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 87. | Southwest (e) | 580 | 447 | 77.1 | 17,343.40 | 9,082 | 1.91 | 1,432.46 | 5,000.00 | 11,451.47 | 0.00 | 35,227.33 | 3.88 |
| 88. | Southeast (e) | 185 | 131 | 70.8 | 2,440.04 | 2,763 | 0.88 | 3,297.69 | 0.00 | 3,552.30 | 0.00 | 9,290.03 | 3.36 |
| 89. | Northeast | 328 | 272 | 82.9 | 1,227.68 | 4,231 | 0.29 | 214.33 | 0.00 | 37,003.69 | 0.00 | 38,445.70 | 9.09 |
| 90. | Northwest (e) | 344 | 310 | 90.1 | 6,650.87 | 5,938 | 1.12 | 2,485.99 | 0.00 | 72,170.61 | 0.00 | 81,307.47 | 13.69 |
| 91. | Saskatchewan Canada | 279 | 116 | 41.6 | 25,612.24 | 2,880 | 8.89 | 686.38 | 0.00 | 8,778.22 | 0.00 | 35,076.84 | 12.18 |
| 92. | Washington State East | 497 | 202 | 40.6 | 35,435.83 | 5,968 | 5.94 | 1,611.76 | 0.00 | 2,848.29 | 0.00 | 39,895.88 | 6.68 |
| 93. | Central California | 1,121 | 416 | 37.1% | 113,542.18 | 28,419 | 4.00 | 9,621.18 | 5,000.00 | 9,021.22 | 699.39 | 137,883.97 | 4.85 |
| | **Total U.S./ Canada** | 66,336 | 27,542 | 41.5% | $6,456,173.80 | 1,362,402 | $464.67 | 608,582.12 | $92,410.35 | $668,423.09 | $18,064.21 | $7,843,653.57 | $5.76 |
| | Individual, in-memoriam & special meetings | | | | 719,056.68 | | | | | | | | |
| | Specials | | | | 668,423.09 | | | | | | | | |
| | **Total for U.S. & Canada** | | | | $7,843,653.57 | | | | | | | | |
| | **FOREIGN AND OTHER** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Loners | | | | $419.08 | | | | | | | $419.08 | |
| | International Lawyers | | | | 1,000.00 | | | | | | | 1,000.00 | |
| | Birds of a Feather | | | | 1,000.00 | | | | | | | 1,000.00 | |
| | Foreign, WSM, other | | | | 84,376.67 | | | | | | | 84,376.67 | |
| | Online and Telephone Meetings | | | | 4,420.15 | | | | | | | 4,420.15 | |
| | **Grand Total** | | | | $7,934,869.47 | | | | | | | $7,934,869.47 | |

## CONTRIBUTION COMPARISON – 2016-2015 *(in U.S. dollars)*

| | #GPS. REPORTED | #GPS. CONTRIB. | % OF GPS. CONTRIB. | TOTAL GROUP CONTRIB. | MEMBERSHIP | TOTAL PER CAPITA INCLUDING SPECIALS ETC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| U.S. & Canada 2016 | 66,336 | 27,542 | 41.5% | $6,456,173.80 | 1,362,402 | $5.76 |
| U.S. & Canada 2015 | 65,741 | 26,500 | 40.3% | $5,973,123.75 | 1,348,072 | $5.24 |
| Increase (Decrease) | 595 | 1,042 | 1.2% | $483.050.05 | 14,330 | $0.52 |

| | 2016 | 2015 |
|---|---|---|
| **EST. COST OF SERVICES PER CAPITA** | 7.27 | $7.14 |

(1) A Special contribution is one that comes from any number of A.A. entities that is not an A.A. group. For example, a conference, a aommittee, an area, a district, an intergroup, etc.
(2) A Special Meeting is a meeting that does not want to be a group but does want to contribute to the General Service Board.
(3) Reflects not only those groups that contributed directly to G.S.O., but also those groups that contributed through their Conference areas (per info from areas).

# The Budget Highlights

## 2017 G.S.O. Budget

These budget highlights describe the "OPERATIONS" of the General Service Office — A.A. World Services (the Publishing operation), the General Fund (Service activities) and the Grapevine Operations. It excludes any activities reported separately in the Reserve Fund, Convention Fund, Post Retirement Fund or the Capital Projects Fund.

**Income:** The 2017 budget projects literature gross sales of $13,750,000. When approving the 2017 budget, the A.A.W.S. Board continued to focus diligently on revenue and expense assumptions and how they ultimately affect the long-term fiscal health of the General Service Board and its Reserve Fund.

Manufacturing, shipping and warehousing costs are budgeted slightly higher than the 2016 results taking into consideration inflationary increases and the expected increment in unit sales.

After subtracting manufacturing and shipping and warehousing costs, gross profit is budgeted at $8,810,550, or 65.2%. The 65.2% gross profit percentage anticipated for 2017 compares with 67.8% realized for 2016 and 66.9% budgeted for 2016.

It should be recognized that as we continue to strive to have literature available throughout our Service Structure in Spanish and French, as well as English, lower print runs in non-English languages usually results in higher production costs. We strive to have the same selling prices regardless of the manufacturing cost; therefore lower gross profit margins for low volume items will affect the overall gross profit percentages in the future.

The table below reflects the Gross Profit Percentages from 2012 through the 2017 budget.

| 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 Budget |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 63.7% | 64.3% | 58.6% | 65.4% | 67.8% | 65.2% |

Prudence dictates that ongoing reviews are necessary to control costs and reinforce the revenue stream to provide sufficient funds to continue providing services. Trusted servants continue to evaluate costs of operations as well as assess the services provided.

**Contributions:** Seventh Tradition self-support contributions for 2017 are budgeted at $7,675,000, which is just slightly higher than the 2016 budget.

During 2016, contributions from groups and individuals (as distinguished from those received for the World Service Meeting literature efforts) of $7,871,984 were $816,984 greater than budget and $762,646 greater than 2015. Contributions received from World Service Meeting countries toward the World Service Meeting International Literature efforts amounted to $62,885. Total contributions including WSM efforts were just over $7,934,869.

The percentage of the A.A. groups that choose to list with the General Service Office that have participated in the Seventh Tradition by contributing to the General Service Office was 41.5% in 2016. For the last ten years it has been in a relatively stable range (between 40% and 45%).

**Total Operating Revenue** for 2017 is anticipated at $16,485,950, a decrease of approximately $400,000 compared to 2016 actual.

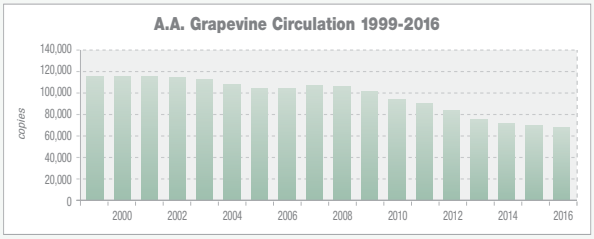
**Total Operating Expenses** for 2017 have been budgeted at $16,088,152, approximately $660,932 greater than 2016 expenses and $46,323 less than the 2016 budget.

The 2017 G.S.O. budget anticipates an excess of revenue over expenses of $397,798.

It should be remembered that generally the Reserve Fund is funded by literature profits. This anticipated profit for 2017 compares with a profit of $1,453,220 for 2016; $205,625 for 2015; $1,376,656 for 2014; $31,554 for 2013; $152,448 for 2012; $819,132 for 2011; $1,255,289 for 2010; $1,273,500 for 2009; and a loss of $275,000 for 2008.

## 2017 Grapevine Budget

The 2017 Grapevine Budget calls for an average circulation for the print magazine of 68,592. This anticipates 1,777 fewer copies than the 2016 budget and approximately 3,219 copies fewer than the 2016 average paid print circulation of 71,811. The 2017 budget calls for approximately 5,251 GV online subscriptions, which compares with the 2016 budget of 5,097 and the 5,030 actually achieved. Print magazine circulation for the last 18 years is depicted in the accompanying chart.

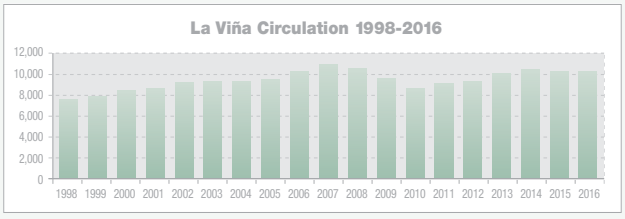



**Income:** Magazine income of $2,012,507 is expected approximately $91,702 less than 2016 actual. Other Publishing Income from books, cassette tapes and miscellaneous items is budgeted at $689,321, approximately $2,792 less than 2016.

**Total Gross Profit:** Combining the magazine and other publishing items, a gross profit of $1,799,506 is budgeted for 2017. This compares with $1,884,674 achieved for 2016 and the 2016 budget of $1,717,182.

**Total Operating Expenses:** Total Operating Expenses for 2017 are budgeted at $1,928,565, which is $172,860 greater than the 2016 expenses of $1,755,705, and $60,618 more than the 2016 budget.

**Net Income (loss):** For 2017, the Grapevine anticipates a net loss of $113,960. This compares with a 2016 budgeted loss of $146,064 and an actual profit from operations of $144,069.




## 2017 La Viña Budget

Following the 1995 General Service Conference Advisory Action #7, the publication of the Grapevine magazine in Spanish was approved by both the Grapevine Board and the trustees' Finance Committee of the General Service Board. Recognizing this publication as a new venture, both boards were to review the financial impact on the Fellowship and the progress in circulation growth and to continue to monitor the viability of this new venture. In 2001, the General Service Board recommended, and the 2001 Conference approved, that the La Viña magazine continues to be published by the Grapevine and that any ongoing shortfall between revenues and operating expenses be funded by the General Service Board General Fund, instead of continuing to draw funds directly from the Reserve Fund.

For 2017, La Viña expects a gross profit on the magazine of $46,645, compared with $52,741 achieved in 2016. Circulation for 2017 is estimated to decline to 9,579. Other Publishing Income is estimated at $27,629, which after deducting cost of product of $9,029 expects to contribute $18,600 to revenue. Total costs and expenses are estimated at $233,060 for 2017, approximately $6,100 greater than 2016 and $3,300 more than the 2016 budget. The 2017 budget projects a shortfall of expense over revenue of $167,816, to be funded by the General Service Board General Fund. The anticipated 2017 shortfall is $15,734 greater than the 2016 shortfall of $152,082. As noted above these shortfalls for this service activity is funded by the General Service Board General Fund. Net shortfall since inception (1995) to date is approximately $2,099,130.

The accompanying chart reflects La Viña magazine circulation.

# 2017 Conference Committees

### Conference Agenda

*PANEL 66*

Ian R. — *Area 80, Manitoba*
Barry S.* — *Area 18, Idaho*
Jim S.** — *Area 62, South Carolina*

*PANEL 67*

Keith D. — *Area 65, Northeast Texas*
John K. — *Area 60, W. Pennsylvania*
Jean-Noel L. — *Area 88, Southeast Québec*
Scott M. — *Area 52, North Dakota*
Barb W. — *Area 75, Southern Wisconsin*

*Secretary: Rick W.*

### Cooperation with the Professional Community

*PANEL 66*

John C.* — *Area 55, Northwest Ohio*
Dave H.** — *Area 66, Northwest Texas*
Ernie M. — *Area 16, Georgia*

*PANEL 67*

Thomas B. — *Area 5, Southern California*
Bruce C. — *Area 22, Northern Indiana*
Ed S. — *Area 91, Saskatchewan*
Ian S. — *Area 38, Eastern Missouri*
Linda W. — *Area 1, Alabama/NW Florida*

*Secretary: Mary C.*

### Corrections

*PANEL 66*

Michael C.* — *Area 90, Northwest Québec*
Dale R. — *Area 43, New Hampshire*
Vikki R. — *Area 7, Northern Interior CA*
Susan R. — *Area 12, Delaware*
Denise T.** — *Area 68, Southwest Texas*

*PANEL 67*

Frank G. — *Area 53, Central SE Ohio*
Wade J. — *Area 69, Utah*
Carlyle W. — *Area 33, Southeast Michigan*

*Secretary: Jeff W.*

### Finance

*PANEL 66*

Kenny B. — *Area 26, Kentucky*
Jim C. — *Area 84, Northeast Ontario*
Kelly D.** — *Area 35, Northern Minnesota*
Linda J.* — *Area 29, Maryland*

*PANEL 67*

Elliott B. — *Area 71, Virginia*
Tom F. — *Area 4, Arkansas*
Joann L. — *Area 6, Northern Coastal CA*
Ted S. — *Area 32, Central Michigan*

*Secretary: Bob Slotterback*

### Grapevine

*PANEL 66*

Dave B.* — *Area 3, Arizona*
Kelly L. — *Area 20, Northern Illinois*
Fredy M. — *Area 86, Western Ontario*
Michelle S.** — *Area 76, Wyoming*
Tony S. — *Area 64, Tennessee*

*PANEL 67*

Ben B. — *Area 57, Oklahoma*
Paul M. — *Area 59, E. Pennsylvania*
Melvin M. — *Area 93, Central California*
Jason R. — *Area 13, Washington, D.C.*

*Secretary: Jon W.*

### Literature

*PANEL 66*

Laura G.* — *Area 56, Southwest Ohio*
Larry M. — *Area 78, Alberta/NWT*
Mark N. — *Area 31, W. Massachusetts*
Derek T.** — *Area 74, N. WI/Upper Pen. MI*
Gilberto V. — *Area 77, Puerto Rico*

*PANEL 67*

Joyce C. — *Area 14, North Florida*
Steve C. — *Area 72, Western Washington*
Bob D. — *Area 85, Northwest Ontario*
John W. — *Area 49, Southeast New York*

*Secretary: Sandra W.*

### Policy/Admissions

*PANEL 66*

Bub B. — *Area 37, Mississippi*
Jim H. — *Area 46, New Mexico*
Bob R.* — *Area 70, Vermont*
Gene W.** — *Area 28, Maine*

*PANEL 67*

Annie C. — *Area 15, S. FL/Bhms/VI/Antigua*
Bob H. — *Area 17, Hawaii*
Leon H. — *Area 19, Chicago, Illinois*
Tim M. — *Area 82, Nova Scotia/NL*
Rick W. — *Area 24, Iowa*

*Secretary: Eva S.*

### Public Information

*PANEL 66*

Jim G. — *Area 34, Western Michigan*
Laura H. — *Area 2, Alaska*
Andrew L.* — *Area 45, So. New Jersey*
Scott R. — *Area 92, Washington East*
Bill W.** — *Area 48, H/M/B New York*

*PANEL 67*

Jade F.-H. — *Area 79, BC/Yukon*
Marjorie H. — *Area 39, Western Missouri*
Gerry R. — *Area 40, Montana*
Kim S. — *Area 83, Eastern Ontario*

*Secretary: Clay R.*

### Report and Charter

*PANEL 66*

Jane G.* — *Area 8, San Diego/Imp. CA*
Thomas G.** — *Area 87, Southwest Québec*
Bob M. — *Area 63, South Dakota*

*PANEL 67*

Jamie B. — *Area 54, Northeast Ohio*
Erica C. — *Area 10, Colorado*
Kenneth C. — *Area 51, North Carolina*
Lester G. — *Area 44, Northern New Jersey*
Joe S. — *Area 47, Central New York*

*Secretary: Racy J.*

### Treatment and Accessibilities

*PANEL 66*

Joe C.* — *Area 9, Mid-Southern CA*
Kenny D.** — *Area 61, Rhode Island*
Wally E. — *Area 50, Western New York*
Trent G. — *Area 41, Nebraska*

*PANEL 67*

Benoît B. — *Area 89, Northeast Québec*
Peggy M. — *Area 11, Connecticut*
Pat T. — *Area 73, West Virginia*
Phil W. — *Area 42, Nevada*

*Secretary: Clement C.*

### Trustees

*PANEL 66*

Charlotte C.* — *Area 23, Southern Indiana*
Sue C. — *Area 25, Kansas*
Reilly K.** — *Area 58, Oregon*
Michael D. — *Area 81, New Brunswick/PEI*

*PANEL 67*

Ron C. — *Area 67, Southeast Texas*
Curt K. — *Area 36, Southern Minnesota*
Moe M. — *Area 27, Louisiana*
Pat W. — *Area 21, Southern Illinois*
Sue W. — *Area 30, E. Massachusetts*

*Secretary: Julio E.*

### Archives

*PANEL 66*

Sue C.** — *Area 25, Kansas*
Michael D.* — *Area 81, New Brunswick/PEI*
Scott R. — *Area 92, Washington East*
Gilberto V. — *Area 77, Puerto Rico*

*PANEL 67*

Jade F.-H. — *Area 79, BC/Yukon*
Scott M. — *Area 52, North Dakota*
Ted S. — *Area 32, Central Michigan*
John W. — *Area 49, Southeast New York*

*Secretary: Michelle Mirza*

### International Conventions/ Regional Forums

*PANEL 66*

Bub B. — *Area 37, Mississippi*
Jim H. — *Area 46, New Mexico*
Fredy M.** — *Area 86, Western Ontario*
Ian R.* — *Area 80, Manitoba*
Michelle S. — *Area 76, Wyoming*

*PANEL 67*

Wade J. — *Area 69, Utah*
Joe S. — *Area 47, Central New York*
Barb W. — *Area 75, Southern Wisconsin*

*Secretary: Julio E., Steve S.*

*Chair
**Alternate Chair

## 2018 CONFERENCE CHAIRPERSONS AND ALTERNATE CHAIRPERSONS[1]

| Committee | Chairperson | Alternate |
|---|---|---|
| Agenda | Scott M., North Dakota | Barb W., Southern Wisconsin |
| [2]Archives | Jade F.-H., BC/Yukon | Ted S., Central Michigan |
| Cooperation with the Professional Community | Thomas B., Southern California | Ian S., Eastern Missouri |
| Corrections | Wade J., Utah | Carlyle W., SE Michigan |
| Finance | Elliot B., Virginia | Ted S., Central Michigan |
| Grapevine | Jason R., Washington, D.C. | Ben B., Oklahoma |
| [2]International Conv./Regional Forums | Joe S., Central New York | Barb W., Southern Wisconsin |
| Literature | John W., Southeast New York | Joyce C., North Florida |
| Policy/Admissions | Annie C., South Florida/Bahamas/ V.I./Antigua | Tim M., Nova Scotia/NL |
| Public Information | Gerry R., Montana | Jade F.-H., BC/Yukon |
| Report and Charter | Erica C., Colorado | Kenneth C., North Carolina |
| Treatment and Accessibilities | Peggy M., Connecticut | Benoît B., Northeast Québec |
| Trustees | Curt K., Southern Minnesota | Sue W., Eastern Massachusetts |

[1]The 2017 committee chairs rotated at the end of the 67th General Service Conference.
[2]Members of this committee serve on this as a secondary committee assignment.

# 2017 Trustees' Committees

### Archives
Peter Luongo, *chairperson*
Lynda B.
Josh E.
Bill F.
Nancy M.
Homer M.
Chet P.
Michelle Mirza, *secretary*

### Audit
David Morris, *chairperson*
Richard B.
Joel C.
Don Meurer, *secretary*

### Compensation
Bill N., *chairperson*
Joel C.
Scott H.
Olga Mesonjnik, *secretary*

### Conference
Bill N., *chairperson*
Carole B.
Richard B.
Josh E.
Peter Luongo
Homer M.
Bob W.
Rick W., *secretary*

### Cooperation with the Professional Community/ Treatment and Accessibilities
Bill F., *chairperson*
Beau B.
Josh E.
Yolanda F.
Ivan Lemelle
Nancy McCarthy
David N.
Cate W.
Racy J., *secretary — C.P.C.*
Clement C., *secretary*
*— Treatment and Accessibilities*

### Corrections
Yolanda F., *chairperson*
Tom A.
Lynda B.
Christine Carpenter
Nancy McCarthy
*Robert M.
Chet P.
Paz P.
Jeff W., *secretary*

### Finance & Budgetary
David Morris, *chairperson*
Leslie Backus
Lynda B.
Carole B.
Joel C.
Scott H.
Richard P.
Robert Slotterback, *secretary*

### International
Bob W., *chairperson*
Tom A.
Richard B.
Beau B.
Christine Carpenter
Scott H.
Paz P.
Mary C., *secretary*

### International Conventions/ A.A. Regional Forums
Richard P., *chairperson*
Leslie Backus
Bill F.
Scott H.
David Morris
David N.
Bill N.
Cate W.
Julio E., *secretary*
*—International Conventions*
Steve S., *secretary*
*—Regional Forums*

### Literature
Richard B., *chairperson*
Beau B.
Yolanda F.
*Cindy F.
*Doug G.
David N.
Paz P.
Cate W.
Sandra W., *secretary*

### Nominating
Chet P., *chairperson*
Leslie Backus
Joel C.
Ivan Lemelle
David Morris
Bill N.
Richard P.
Bob W.
Julio E., *secretary*

### Public Information
Ivan Lemelle, *chairperson*
Tom A.
Carole B.
Beau B.
*Carolyn C.
Christine Carpenter
*Stephanie H.
Peter Luongo
Homer M.
Clay R., *secretary*

### General Sharing Session
Richard B., *chairperson*
Eva S., *secretary*

*Appointed Committeee Member
**Terry Bedient is an ex officio member on all committees; Greg T. is an ex officio member on all committees except the Audit Committee, Compensation Committee and the Nominating Committee.

### Officers of the General Service Board
*Chair,* Terry Bedient
*First vice-chairperson,* Bob W.
*Second vice-chairperson,* Chet P.
*Secretary,* Bill F.
*Treasurer,* David Morris
*Assistant secretary,* Eva S.
*Assistant treasurer,* Bob Slotterback

# 2017 Conference Members

**NONALCOHOLIC (CLASS A) TRUSTEES**

***Terrance (Terry) M. Bedient**, **FACHE,** was elected chairman of the board in 2013, and has served as a Class A trustee and treasurer since 2008. He is currently vice president of the Medical Society of New York and his career has included various executive positions, including hospital chief executive officer. He has served on a dozen nonprofit boards, including as trustee of the New York Lawyer Assistance Trust, which oversees substance abuse programs for attorneys and judges, and as treasurer of the Federation of State Physician Health Programs. Terry is a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives.

**Leslie Sanders Backus** was elected Class A trustee in April 2015. Leslie's professional background is in volunteer leadership and fund development. She is currently chief financial officer in an outpatient substance abuse treatment facility. Leslie serves on the International Conventions/Regional Forums, Finance & Budgetary and Nominating Committees.

**Christine Carpenter** was elected a Class A trustee in April 2016. Judge Carpenter is the Presiding Judge of the 13th Judicial Circuit Court of Missouri. She has both a civil and felony criminal caseload and supervises the six treatment courts in two counties. She serves on the Corrections, Public Information and International Committees.

**The Hon. Ivan L. R. Lemelle** was elected Class A trustee in April 2013. A graduate of Loyola University School of Law, New Orleans, Ivan has an extensive background in both state and federal law. He currently serves as a Senior U.S. District Judge, Visiting Judge in various other federal courts, is active in reentry court and drug court programs, and lectures often at national and international forums. Ivan chairs the Public Information Committee and serves on the Nominating, Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities Committees. He is a member of the Grapevine Board.

**Peter F. Luongo, Ph.D.,** was elected Class A trustee in April 2015. Pete's professional background is in public health services at state and local levels. He is currently executive director, Institute for Research, Education and Training in Addictions (IRETA). Pete chairs the Archives Committee and serves on the Public Information and Conference Committees.

**Nancy J. McCarthy** was elected Class A trustee in April 2016. Nancy has served in various positions with the Missouri Dept. of Corrections, Division of Probation and Parole, where she is now regional administrator. She serves on the Corrections, Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities and Archives Committees.

**David M. Morris, CPA,** was elected Class A trustee in April 2013. Currently, David is the owner of Morris Consulting, a practice that focuses on providing financial and accounting guidance. He is retired from the position of senior vice president, JPMorgan Chase Bank. David chairs the Finance & Budgetary and Audit Committees and serves on the Nominating and International Conventions/Regional Forums Committees.

*Rotating at the close of the 2017 Conference meeting.

## ALCOHOLIC (CLASS B) TRUSTEES

**Thomas A.** was elected West Central regional trustee in April 2016. A Panel 50 delegate, Tom has founded several startup businesses. Tom is currently involved in digital health care technology and real estate, and serves on a number of nonprofit boards. He serves on the Corrections, Public Information and International Committees.

**Carole B.** was elected general service trustee in April 2016. A Panel 59 delegate, Carole has recently served on the A.A.W.S. Board as a nontrustee director. With a background in engineering, she is currently involved in consulting and organization development. She serves on the Conference, Finance & Budgetary and Public Information Committees and is a member of the Grapevine Board.

**Richard B.** was elected Eastern Canada regional trustee in April 2014. A Panel 60 delegate from NW Québec, Richard remains active in his area and region. He is retired from the aerospace industry. Richard chairs the Sharing Session and serves on the Audit, Conference, Literature and International Committees. He is a member of the A.A.W.S. Board.

**Joel C.** was elected Pacific regional trustee in April 2014. A Panel 60 delegate from the San Diego/Imperial Area, Joel is active in his area. A college professor, he chairs the Communication Department. Joel serves on the Compensation, Nominating, Finance & Budgetary and Audit Committees. He also serves as chair of the Grapevine Board.

***William (Bill) F.** was elected East Central regional trustee in April 2013. A Panel 47 delegate, Bill is active in his district with the Corrections Committee. His professional background is in law enforcement and he is involved with community projects. Bill chairs the Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities Committee and serves on the International Conventions/Regional Forums and Archives Committees.

**Yolanda F.** was elected Southwest regional trustee in April 2015. Yolanda was a Panel 50 delegate, where she chaired the Literature Committee. She is retired from the Engineering Department of a telecommunications company. She is active in local A.A. group and district activities. Yolanda chairs the Corrections Committee and serves on the Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities and Literature Committees. She is a member of the Grapevine Board.

**Scott H.** was elected trustee-at-large/Canada in 2015. A Panel 61 delegate, Scott currently takes meetings into a local detox and facilitates Twelfth Step weekends. He is an attorney. Scott serves on the International Conventions/Regional Forums, International, Finance & Budgetary and Compensation Committees.

***William (Bill) N.** was elected general service trustee in April 2013, after serving as an A.A.W.S. nontrustee director for four years. Bill, a Panel 49 delegate, is an executive in the Financial Risk Management field. Bill's love of general service developed as a result of his involvement with the International Conference of Young People in A.A. Bill chairs the Conference and Compensation Committees and serves on the Nominating and International Conventions/Regional Forums Committees. He also chairs the A.A.W.S. Board.

***Chet P.** was elected Southeast regional trustee in April 2013. A Panel 59 delegate, he is involved in his area's Traditions Workshops. Chet is an attorney who has taught various courses at local institutions. Chet chairs the Nominating Committee and serves on the Corrections and Archives Committees.

**Richard P.** was elected Northeast regional trustee in April 2015. A Panel 60 delegate, Rich is active in his district

*Rotating at the close of the 2017 Conference meeting.

and area. He is a certified staffing professional and currently serves as a senior consultant to the staffing industry. Rich chairs the International Conventions/Regional Forums Committee and serves on the Nominating and Finance & Budgetary Committees. He is also a member of the A.A.W.S. Board.

***Robert (Bob) W.** was elected trustee-at-large/U.S. in April 2013. Bob was a Panel 52 delegate, where he chaired the Public Information Committee. He owns an independent insurance agency. He chairs the International Committee and serves on the Conference and Nominating Committees.

**Cate W.** was elected Western Canada regional trustee in April 2016. A Panel 60 delegate, Cate is active in her home group and area. Professionally, she is retired from the telecommunications industry. She serves on the International Conventions/Regional Forums, Literature and Cooperation with the Professional Communities/Treatment and Accessibilities Committees.

## *Trustees elected by the General Service Board following 2017 Conference*

**Cathy B.** was elected Southeast regional trustee in April 2017. A Panel 63 delegate, Cathy is actively involved in sponsorship as well as the area's website and convention committees. Cathy has extensive experience in designing computer-based training programs and has worked in the transit industry for almost 30 years.

**Ginger R. B.** was elected general service trustee in April 2017. A Panel 48 delegate from Area 92, who served as chair of the Literature Committee, she has professional experience in the finance field. Ginger also served as nontrustee director on the Grapevine board from 2007 to 2011.

**Mark E.** was elected East Central regional trustee in April 2017. A Panel 62 delegate, Mark is now actively involved in area archives activities and in his home group. Now retired, Mark had an extensive career in technical television work.

**David N.** was elected general service trustee in April 2017. A Panel 59 delegate, David has served on the A.A.W.S. board as nontrustee director since 2013. He has extensive experience in the health care communications and technology field, with a focus on financial and business operations.

**Newton P.** was elected trustee-at-large/U.S. in April 2017. A Panel 57 delegate, he is now involved in his area's archives and young people's activities. Now retired, Newton served as an Assistant Attorney General of North Carolina in the Revenue and Labor Sections.

### NONTRUSTEE DIRECTORS

***Lynda B.** was elected Grapevine director in 2013. A Panel 56 delegate, she has been active in area service and with La Vigne, the French-language counterpart to Grapevine. She has worked in the finance and accounting field for over 35 years.

**Beau B.** was elected A.A.W.S. Board director in April 2014. In his area, Beau served as the section coordinator and previously served as a D.C.M. He currently manages a consulting service company focused on strategy development, data management and financial analytics.

**Josh E.** was elected A.A. Grapevine director in April 2016. Josh served as an appointed committee member from 2013 to 2015 on the trustees' Committee on Public Information. He remains active in his home group and area. Josh is currently a vice president and executive producer for a global advertising agency.

**Homer M.** was elected A.A.W.S. Board director in April 2016. A Panel 63 delegate from North Carolina, Homer is active in his home group and in his area. Homer is now retired from a long career in manufacturing and operations management.

**Paz P.** was elected A.A. Grapevine director in April 2014. Paz served as an Advisory Board member for La Viña from 2008 to 2012. She served in the Arizona area from 2006 to 2013. She is now involved in the Spanish website committee. Paz is an Outreach and Enrollment Specialist, as well as a registered translator (English/Spanish) and a computer science sophomore student at a university in Arizona.

## *Nontrustee Directors elected by the General Service Board following 2017 Conference*

**Deborah K. A.** was elected A.A.W.S. Board director in April 2017. A Panel 59 delegate from North Carolina, Deborah remains active in her area. She is a clinical neuropsychologist and associate professor at a major university medical center.

**Tommi H.** was elected A.A. Grapevine director in April 2017. Tommi is active both in her home group and in her district with institutional meetings. Tommi has extensive employment experience as an editor and writer and is currently the owner of an events and management company.

## AREA DELEGATES

What do panel numbers mean? Delegates to each Conference are made up of two "panels." One is even-numbered and includes those elected to start serving in an even year. The other is odd-numbered and includes those elected to start serving in an odd year. The 67th Conference includes Panel 66 (delegates now serving for their second year) and Panel 67 (new delegates).

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### UNITED STATES

| State | Area no. | Panel | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Alabama/N.W. Florida** | 1 | 67 | Linda W. |
| **Alaska** | 2 | 66 | Laura H. |
| **Arizona** | 3 | 66 | David B. |
| **Arkansas** | 4 | 67 | Tom F. |
| **California** | | | |
| ***Southern*** | 5 | 67 | Thomas B. |
| ***Central*** | 93 | 67 | Melvin M. |
| ***Northern Coastal*** | 6 | 67 | Joann L. |
| ***Northern Interior*** | 7 | 66 | Victoria R. |
| ***San Diego/Imperial*** | 8 | 66 | Jane G. |
| ***Mid-Southern*** | 9 | 66 | Joseph C. |
| **Colorado** | 10 | 67 | Erica C. |
| **Connecticut** | 11 | 67 | Peggy M. |
| **Delaware** | 12 | 66 | Susan R. |
| **District of Columbia** | 13 | 67 | Jason R. |
| **Florida** | | | |
| ***North*** | 14 | 67 | Joyce C. |
| ***South Florida/ Bahamas/ VI/Antigua*** | 15 | 67 | Annie C. |
| **Georgia** | 16 | 66 | Ernie M. |
| **Hawaii** | 17 | 67 | Robert H. |
| **Idaho** | 18 | 66 | Barry S. |
| **Illinois** | | | |
| ***Chicago*** | 19 | 67 | Leon H. |
| ***Northern*** | 20 | 66 | Kelly L. |
| ***Southern*** | 21 | 67 | Patrick W. |
| **Indiana** | | | |
| ***Northern*** | 22 | 67 | Bruce C. |
| ***Southern*** | 23 | 66 | Charlotte C. |
| **Iowa** | 24 | 67 | Rick W. |
| **Kansas** | 25 | 66 | Sue C. |
| **Kentucky** | 26 | 66 | Kenny B. |
| **Louisiana** | 27 | 67 | Maurice M. |
| **Maine** | 28 | 66 | Gene W. |
| **Maryland** | 29 | 66 | Linda J. |
| **Massachusetts** | | | |
| ***Eastern*** | 30 | 67 | Susan W. |
| ***Western*** | 31 | 66 | Mark N. |
| **Michigan** | | | |
| ***Central*** | 32 | 67 | Theodore S. |
| ***Southeast Michigan*** | 33 | 67 | Carlyle W. |
| ***Western*** | 34 | 66 | James G. |
| **Minnesota** | | | |
| ***Northern*** | 35 | 66 | Kelly D. |
| ***Southern*** | 36 | 67 | Curtis K. |
| **Mississippi** | 37 | 66 | Harry B. |
| **Missouri** | | | |
| ***Eastern*** | 38 | 67 | Ian S. |
| ***Western*** | 39 | 67 | Marjorie H. |

| State | Area no. | Panel | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Montana** | 40 | 67 | Gerry R. |
| **Nebraska** | 41 | 66 | Trent G. |
| **Nevada** | 42 | 67 | Phil W. |
| **New Hampshire** | 43 | 66 | Dale R. |
| **New Jersey** | | | |
| ***Northern*** | 44 | 67 | Lester G. |
| ***Southern*** | 45 | 66 | Andrew L. |
| **New Mexico** | 46 | 66 | James H. |
| **New York** | | | |
| ***Central*** | 47 | 67 | Joseph S. |
| ***Hudson/Mohawk/ Berkshire*** | 48 | 66 | Willis W. |
| ***Southeast*** | 49 | 67 | John W. |
| ***Western*** | 50 | 66 | Walter E. |
| **North Carolina** | 51 | 67 | Kenneth C. |
| **North Dakota** | 52 | 67 | Scott M. |
| **Ohio** | | | |
| ***Central/Southeast*** | 53 | 67 | Frank G. |
| ***Northeast*** | 54 | 67 | Jamie B. |
| ***Northwest*** | 55 | 66 | John C. |
| ***Southwest*** | 56 | 66 | Laura G. |
| **Oklahoma** | 57 | 67 | Ben B. |
| **Oregon** | 58 | 66 | Reilly K. |
| **Pennsylvania** | | | |
| ***Eastern*** | 59 | 67 | Paul M. |
| ***Western*** | 60 | 67 | John K. |

| State | Area no. | Panel | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Rhode Island** | 61 | 66 | Kenneth D. |
| **South Carolina** | 62 | 66 | Jim S. |
| **South Dakota** | 63 | 66 | Robert M. |
| **Tennessee** | 64 | 66 | Anthony S. |
| **Texas** | | | |
| ***Northeast*** | 65 | 67 | Keith D. |
| ***Northwest*** | 66 | 66 | David H. |
| ***Southeast*** | 67 | 67 | Ronald C. |
| ***Southwest*** | 68 | 66 | Denise T. |
| **Utah** | 69 | 67 | Wade J. |
| **Vermont** | 70 | 66 | Robert R. |
| **Virginia** | 71 | 67 | Lawrence B. |
| **Washington State** | | | |
| ***East*** | 92 | 66 | Scott R. |
| ***Western*** | 72 | 67 | Steve C. |
| **West Virginia** | 73 | 67 | Pat T. |
| **Wisconsin** | | | |
| ***N. WI/Up. Penn. MI*** | 74 | 66 | Derek T. |
| ***Southern*** | 75 | 67 | Barbara W. |
| **Wyoming** | 76 | 66 | Michelle S. |
| **Puerto Rico** | 77 | 66 | Gilberto V. |

## CANADA

| Province | Area no. | Panel | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Alberta/NWT** | 78 | 66 | Larry M. |
| **British Columbia/Yukon** | 79 | 67 | Jadine F.-H. |
| **Manitoba** | 80 | 66 | Ian R. |
| **New Brunswick/P.E.I.** | 81 | 66 | Michael D. |
| **Nova Scotia/ Newfoundland/Labrador** | 82 | 67 | Tim M. |
| **Ontario** | | | |
| ***Eastern*** | 83 | 67 | Kim S. |
| ***Northeast*** | 84 | 66 | Timothy C. |
| ***Northwest*** | 85 | 67 | Bob D. |
| ***Western*** | 86 | 66 | Fredy M. |
| **Québec** | | | |
| ***Southwest*** | 87 | 66 | Thomas G. |
| ***Southeast*** | 88 | 67 | Jean-Noël L. |
| ***Northeast*** | 89 | 67 | Benoît B. |
| ***Northwest*** | 90 | 66 | Michael C. |
| **Saskatchewan** | 91 | 67 | Idris S. |

About the Cover: Photo taken outside at the Hilton Westchester, Rye Brook, N.Y. during the 67th General Service Conference.

## A.A. WORLD SERVICES DIRECTORS

Bill N., *chairperson, general service trustee*
Richard B., *regional trustee*
Beau B., *director*
Homer M., *director*
David N., *director*
Richard P., *regional trustee*
Eva S., *G.S.O. staff member*
Greg T., *G.S.O. general manager*

## A.A. GRAPEVINE DIRECTORS

Joel C., *chairperson, regional trustee*
Lynda B., *director*
Carole B., *general service trustee*
Ami B., *executive editor/publisher*
Josh E., *director*
Yolanda F., *regional trustee*
Ivan Lemelle, *Class A trustee*
Paz P., *director*

## GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE STAFF

Greg T., *general manager*
Clement C.
Mary C.
Julio E.
Racy J.
Clay R.
Eva S.
Steve S.
Rick W.
Sandra W.
Jeff W.
Albin Z., *director of administration and staff services*

## GRAPEVINE STAFF

Ami B., *executive editor/publisher*
Irene D., *La Viña editor*
Jon W., *senior editor*

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### Personnel Assisting with the 67th General Service Conference *(Nonvoting)*

Militza Alma-Noyola, *IT Assistant*
Julie Anderson, *Staff Assistant — Trustees Committee*
Janet Bryan, *Grapevine Operations Manager*
Patrick C., *Staff Member — Treatment and Accessibilities*
Nancy Davis, *Executive Assistant to General Manager*
Cynthia Garippa, *Director Technology Services*
Karen Hale, *Senior Manager Administrative Services*
April Hegner, *Senior Archivist*
Danielle Isaac, *Staff Assistant — Literature Committee*
Andrée Lanoix, *French Language Interpreter*
Olivier Lepage, *French Language Interpreter*
Diana L., *Staff Member — Corrections*
Zenaida Medina, *Accounting Department Manager*
Michelle Mirza, *Archives Director*
Valerie O'N., *Hotel Coordinator/On-site Manager*
Jocelyn Pena, *Support Services — CPC/Treatment and Accessibilities Committees*
Daniel Pensante, *Controller, A.A. Grapevine*
Ivy Rivera, *Staff Assistant — Regional Forums*
David R., *Publishing Director*
Melvin Samuel, *Copy Room Coordinator*
Jason S., *Artist, Conference Final Report*
Frank Segui, *Finance Assistant*
Malini Singh, *Publishing Operations Manager*
Robert Slotterback, *Director of Finance*
Kevin Sunkel, *Independent Auditor*
Ames S., *Managing Editor*
Greg Talley, *Consultant, International Convention/Site Selection*
Rocio Taveras, *Staff Assistant — Report and Charter Committee*
Andre Washington, *Office Services Manager*
Nay Williams-Wise, *Conference Staff Assistant — Agenda Committee*